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CHRISTOLOGY AND CRITICISM

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BY

BENJAMIN BRECKINRIDGE WARFIELD, 1851-1921

Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology
in the Theological Seminary of Princeton
New Jersey, 1887–1921

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PREFATORY NOTE

Rev. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, D.D., LL.D., Professor of Didactic and Polemic Theology in the Theological Seminary of the Presbyterian Church at Princeton, New Jersey, provided in his will for the collection and publication of the numerous articles on theological subjects which he contributed to encyclopaedias, reviews and other periodicals, and appointed a committee to edit and publish these papers. In pursuance of his instructions, this, the third volume, containing his historico-critical articles on the Person and work of Christ, has been prepared under the editorial direction of this committee.

The generous permission to publish articles contained in this volume is gratefully acknowledged as follows: Funk and Wagnalls, for the article taken from "The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge," The University of Chicago Press for the articles taken from *The American Journal of Theology*, Harvard Divinity School, for the articles taken from *The Harvard Theological Review*, and Mr. Leroy Phillips for the article taken from *The Hibbert Journal*.

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Ethelbert D. Warfield
William Park Armstrong
Caspar Wistar Hodge
Committee.

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I

THE DIVINE MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE DIVINE MESSIAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT[1]

THE question whether the Old Testament has any testimony to give as to the Deity of our Lord, when strictly taken, resolves itself into the question whether the Old Testament holds out the promise of a Divine Messiah. To gather the intimations of a multiplicity in the Divine unity which may be thought to be discoverable in the Old Testament,[2] has an important indeed, but, in the first instance at least,[3] only an indirect bearing on this precise question. It may render, it is true, the primary service of removing any antecedent presumption against the witness of the Old Testament to the Deity of the Messiah, which may be supposed to arise from the strict monadism of Old Testament monotheism. It is quite conceivable, however, that the Messiah might be thought to be Divine, and yet God not be conceived pluralistically. And certainly there is no reason why, in the delivery of doctrine, the Deity of the Messiah might not be taught before the multiplicity in the unity of the Godhead had been revealed. In the history of Christian doctrine the conviction of the Deity of Christ was the condition, not the result, of the formulation of the doctrine of the Trinity.

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[1] From *The Princeton Theological Review,* xiv. 1916, pp. 379–416.

[2] As H. P. Liddon does in the former portion of the lecture in which he deals with the "Anticipations of Christ's Divinity in the Old Testament" ("The Divinity of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ." Bampton Lectures for 1866. Ed. 4, 1869, pp. 44 ff.). Similarly E. W. Hengstenberg gives by far the greater part of his essay on "The Divinity of the Messiah in the Old Testament" ("Christology of the Old Testament," 1829, E. T. of ed. 2, 1865, pp. 282–331), — namely from p. 284 on — to a discussion of the Angel of Jehovah.

[3] For such questions remain as, for example, whether the Angel of Jehovah be not identified in the Old Testament itself with the Messiah (Daniel, Malachi). So G. F. Oehler (art. "Messias" in Herzog's "Realencyc.," p. 417; "Teol. des A. T.," ii. pp. 144, 265; "The Theology of the Old Testament," E. T. American ed., pp. 446, 528), A. Hilgenfeld, "Die jüdische Apokolyptik," pp. 47 ff. Cf. E. Riehm, "Messianic Prophecy," E. T.[2] pp. 195, 282, who cites these references in order to oppose them.

It cannot be said in any case, therefore, that the discovery of a Divine Messiah in the Old Testament is dependent on the discovery also in the Old Testament of intimations of multiplicity in the unity of the Godhead. The two things go together in the sense that the discovery of either would be a natural preparation for the discovery of the other; that it would supply a matrix into which the other would nicely fit; and would set over against it a correlative doctrine with which it would readily unite to form a rational system. The two doctrines, though interdependent and mutually supporting one another in the system of which they form parts, are nevertheless not so dependent on one another that one of them might not conceivably be true without the other, and certainly not so that one could not conceivably be taught before the other. It seems in every way best, therefore, when inquiring after Old Testament intimations of the Deity of Christ, to keep this inquiry distinct from the parallel inquiry into possible Old Testament intimations of the multiplex constitution of the Godhead.

It is quite clear, at the outset, that the writers of the New Testament and Christ Himself understood the Old Testament to recognize and to teach that the Messiah was to be of divine nature. For example, they without hesitation support their own assertions of the Deity of Christ by appeals to Old Testament passages in which they find the Deity of the Messiah afore-proclaimed. This habit may be observed, as well as anywhere else perhaps, in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. There, the author, after having announced the exalted nature of the Son, as the effulgence of the glory and the very image of the substance of God, illustrates His superiority to the angels, the highest of creatures, by appealing to a series of Old Testament passages, in which a " more excellent name " than is given to angels is shown to belong of right to Him. The exaltation of the Son to the right hand of the majesty on high, he says, is in accordance with the intrinsic dignity of His person as manifested in this " more excellent name." The " more excellent name" which he cites from the Old Testament is in the first instance none other than that of Son itself, whence we learn that when the Old Testament gives to the Messiah the designation of Son of God — or we would better say, when it ascribes Sonship to God to Him (for it is after this broader fashion that the author develops his theme) — it ascribes to Him, in the view of the author of this Epistle, a super-angelic dignity of person.[4] Of this Son, now, he goes on to say that, in contrast with the names of mere ministry given to the angels, there are ascribed to Him the supreme names of "God" and "Lord"; and with the names all the dignities and functions which they naturally connote. These great names of "God" and "Lord" are apparently not adduced as new names, additional to that of "Son," but as explications of the contents of that one "more excellent name"; and thus we are advised of the loftiness of the name of "Son" in the mind of this writer.[5] From this catena of passages we perceive, then, that in the view of this writer the Old Testament presents to our contemplation a Messiah who is not merely transcendent but sheerly Divine; to whom the great names of "Son of God," "God," "Lord" belong of right, and to whom are ascribed all the dignities, powers and functions which these great names suggest.

The passages of Scripture relied upon by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews to make his point are, broadly speaking, derived from what we know as the Messianic Psalms. More particularly, his argument depends especially on citations from the Second, Forty-fifth, and Hundred-and-tenth Psalms. Except for an allusion in Rev. xix. 8 the Forty-fifth Psalm is not elsewhere cited in the New Testament. But the Second and Hundred-and-tenth seem to have been much in the minds, and passages from them much on the lips, of its writers. To the Second, the very term Messiah, Christ, as applied to our Lord, goes back, as well as His loftier designation of Son of God; and it is adduced with great reverence as the Old Testament basis of these titles not only by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 5; v. 5), but by the original apostles (Acts iv. 24–26) and by Paul (Acts xiii. 33) as reported in the Acts, while its language has supplied to the Book of Revelation its standing phrases for describing the completeness of our Lord's conquest of the world (Rev. ii. 27; xii. 5; xix. 15). It was the Hundred-and-tenth Psalm which first gave expression to the Session of the Messiah at the right-hand of God, and not only is it repeatedly referred to with reference to this great fact by the Epistle to the Hebrews (i. 13; v. 6; vii. 17–21; x. 13), but Paul adopts its language when speaking of the exaltation of Christ (I Cor. xv. 25) and Peter, in his initial proclamation of the Gospel at Pentecost, employs it in proof that Jesus has been raised to the right-hand of God and made Lord of Salvation (Acts ii. 32–36). Even more to the point, Jesus Himself adduces it to confound His opponents, who, harping on the title "Son of David," had forgotten that David himself recognized this, his greater Son as also his Lord. "And Jesus answered and said, we read in Mark's narrative (xii. 35–37; cf. Mt. xxii. 45–46; Lk. xx. 41–44), How say the Scribes that the Christ is the Son of David? David himself said in the Holy Spirit, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet. David himself calleth Him Lord; and whence then is He his Son?" We shall let Johannes Weiss tell us what this means. The Scribes, says he,[6] had built up a whole system of doctrine about the Messiah, and an important caption in it ran that He (according to the prophesy, for example, of Is. xi. 1) is (the present is timeless: He must be it: that is required by the doctrine) a descendant of David. "This declaration Jesus proves untenable, since David in his Psalm cx inspired by the Holy Spirit, calls the Messiah his 'Lord,' and, therefore, to put it bluntly, looks up to Him with religious veneration. . . . It follows from this that He must be a higher being than David himself. . . . Jesus accordingly shows here that his conception of the Messiah was different from the current political one. According to the Book of Daniel, and according to the convictions of the pious circle out of which the so-called Apocalypses came the Messiah comes down from heaven, 'the man on the clouds.' That Jesus also thought thus we have already seen." Johannes Weiss writes, of course, from his own point of view, which we do not share in many of its implications — as, for example, in the assumption that Jesus repudiates descent from David. He makes, however, the main matter perfectly clear. Jesus saw in the Hundred-and-tenth Psalm a reference to the transcendent Messiah in which He Himself believed.[7] In Jesus' view, therefore, the transcendent Messiah is already an object of Old Testament revelation. Ps. 110

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[4] This representation of the author, embodied in the sharp demand: "Unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my son?" has given the commentators some trouble in view of the designation of the angels in the Old Testament as "Sons of God." The notes of A. B. Davidson and Franz Delitzsch may be profitably consulted. When G. Hollmann, *in loc.*, pp. 204–205, remarks: "There is meant not the mere name of son, which is used in the Old Testament, as of the people, the king, and others, so also of angels but *the* name of Son, which is described in verses 2 and 3, according to its contents and its peculiarity," he is right in the substance of the matter but hardly in form.

[5] Cf. Lünemann (in Meyer, E. T. p. 83) on the passage.

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[6] "Die Schriften des Neuen Testaments,^{1} 1906, i. p. 175.

What Jesus and the writers of the New Testament saw in the Messianic references of the Psalms, it is natural that those who share their view-point should also see in them. How the matter looks to one of the most searching expounders of the Scriptures that God has as yet given His church — we mean E. W. Hengstenberg — he sums up himself for us in a passage brief enough to quote in its entirety.[8] He has no difficulty in speaking directly of passages in the Psalms "which contain a reference to the superhuman nature of the Messiah; — passages," he adds,

Hengstenbe

> on which we must the less think of forcing another meaning as in the prophets (for example, in Is. ix. where even Hitzig is obliged to recognize it) there is found something unquestionably similar.

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[7] Cf. the discussion of the meaning of Jesus' question and comment, F. Godet *in loc.* Luke (E. T. ii. pp. 251–254): and also J. A. Alexander on Mk. xii. p. 37.

[8] "Commentary on the Psalms," E. T. iii. appendix, p. lvi. in the essay "On the Doctrinal Matter of the Psalms," near the beginning.

> Such indications [he continues] pervade all the Messianic Psalms; and quite naturally. For the more deeply the knowledge of human sinfulness, impotence and nothingness sunk into Israel (compare, for example, Ps. ciii. 14–16), the less could men remain satisfied with the thought of a merely human redeemer, who, according to the Israelitish manner of contemplation, could do extremely little. A human king (and all the strictly Messianic Psalms have to do with Messiah as king), even of the most glorious description, could never accomplish what the idea of the kingdom of God imperiously required, and what had been promised even in the first announcement respecting the Messiah, namely, the bringing the nations into obedience, blessing all the families of the earth, and acquiring the sovereignty of the world. In Psalm ii. 12, the Messiah is presented *simpliciter* as the Son of God, as He, confidence in whom brings salvation, whose wrath is perdition. In Psalm xlv. 6–7 He is named God, Elohim. In Psalm lxxii. 5, 7, 17, eternity of dominion is ascribed to Him. In Psalm cx. 1, He at last appears as the Lord of the community of saints and of David himself, sitting at the right hand of the Almighty, and installed in the full enjoyment of Divine authority over heaven and earth.

That the state of the case may be fully before us, it will be useful to place by the side of this brief statement a somewhat more lengthy one, the tone of which very fairly represents the spirit of devout students of Scripture of the middle of last century. For a reason which will appear later, it seems to us to be an unusually instructive statement, to the entire compass of which it will repay us to give attention. We draw it from William Binnie's work on the Psalms:[9]

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> Respecting the Person of Christ, the testimony of the Psalms is copious and sufficiently distinct. For one thing, it is everywhere assumed that He is the Kinsman of His people. The Christ of the Old Testament is one who is to be born of the seed of *Abraham* and *family of David*. The modern Rationalists, in common with the unbelieving Jews of all ages, refuse to go further. They will not recognize in Him more than man, maintaining with great confidence that superhuman dignity is never attributed to the Messiah, either in the

[9] "The Psalms: Their History, Teachings and Use," 1870, pp. 200 ff.

law, or the prophets, or the psalms. It would be strange indeed if the fact were so. The disciples were slow of heart to receive any truth that happened to lie out of the line of their prior expectations, — any truth of which the faithful who lived before the incarnation had had no presentiment; yet we know that they readily accepted the truth that Jesus was more than man. The Cross of Christ was long an offence to them. It was not without a long struggle that they were constrained to acknowledge the abrogation of the Mosaic law and the opening of the door of faith to the Gentiles. But there is no trace of any similar struggle in regard to Christ's *superhuman dignity*. The moment Nathaniel recognized in Jesus of Nazareth the expected Redeemer, he cried out, " Rabbi, thou art the Son of God "; and, long before the close of the public ministry, Peter, in the name of all the rest, made the articulate profession of faith, " Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." They believed Him to be the Son of God, in a sense in which it would have been blasphemy to affirm the same of any mere man. Instead, therefore, of deeming it a thing incredible, or highly improbable, that intimations of Christ's superhuman dignity should be found in the psalms, we think it in every way likely that they will be discoverable on a diligent search. In truth they are neither few nor recondite. Take these three verses:

" Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever:
A scepter of equity is the scepter of Thy kingdom " (xlv. 6).
" Jehovah hath said unto me, Thou art my Son;
This day have I begotten Thee " (ii. 7).
" Thus saith Jehovah to my Lord,
Sit Thou at my right hand,
Until I lay Thy foes as a footstool at Thy feet " (cx. 1).

I do not forget the attempts that have been made to put a lower sense on each of these passages. I do not think they are successful. But suppose it were admitted to be just possible to put on each of them separately, a meaning that should come short of the ascription of superhuman dignity to the Son of David, we should still be entitled to deduce an argument in favor of our interpretation from the fact that in so many separate places, He is spoken of in terms which most naturally suggest the thought of a superhuman person. From the exclamation of Nathaniel it is evident that the thought did suggest itself to the Jews, before the veil of unbelief settled down upon their hearts in the reading of the Old Testament. The truth is that, if a man reject the eternal Godhead of Christ, he must either lay the Psalms aside or sing them with bated breath. The Messiah whom they celebrate is fairer than the sons of men, one whom the peoples shall praise for ever and ever (Ps. xlv. 2, 17). The ancient Jews understood the particular psalms now quoted to refer to the Messiah; and no one who heartily believes in the inspiration of the Psalter will be at a loss to discern in it more testimonies to the proper Divinity of the Hope of Israel than could well have been discovered before His incarnation and death lighted up so many dark places of the ancient Scriptures. It will be sufficient for our purpose to indicate a single example. The coming of Jehovah to establish a reign of righteousness in all the earth is exultingly announced in several lofty psalms. It may be doubted, indeed, whether the ancient Jews were able to link these to the person of the Messiah; but we are enabled to do it, and have good ground to know that it was of Him that the Spirit spoke in them from the first. The announcement is thus made in the Ninety-sixth Psalm:

11. " Let the heavens rejoice and let the earth be glad;
        Let the sea roar, and the fulness thereof;
12. Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein:
        Then shall all the trees of the wood shout for joy
13. Before Jehovah: for He cometh, for He cometh to judge the earth:
    He shall judge the world with righteousness,
        And the peoples with His faithfulness."

We know whose advent this is. No Christian can doubt that the proper response to the announcement is that furnished by the Book of Revelation, " Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

The circumstance which lends peculiar instructiveness to this statement is that, although conceived in a popular vein, and addressed rather to instruct the popular mind than to meet the difficulties raised by sceptical criticism; although written with absolutely no fear of sceptical criticism before the eye, — witness the unhesitating employment of John's Gospel as testimony to historical fact — and of course without knowledge of the phases of criticism which belong particularly to the twentieth century: it yet in all its main assertions fits so nicely into the present state of critical opinion that it might well have been written yesterday instead of fifty years ago. For example, it was rather bold fifty years ago to declare that it was the cross purely and simply, and not the assertion of a superhuman dignity for Christ, which was an offence to our Lord's Jewish contemporaries. Such a declaration is a commonplace today. There are few things which are more vigorously asserted by the latest phase of sceptical criticism than that the doctrine of a superhuman Messiah was native to pre-Christian Judaism. "The house was already prepared," declares W. Bousset;[10] "the faith in Jesus only needed to enter it." The whole secret of the Christology of the New Testament, explains Hermann Gunkel,[11] lies in the fact that it was the Christology of pre-Christian Judaism before it was the Christology of Christianity. It came from afar — this picture of the heavenly King, he intimates; but it had taken such hold of men that they could not free themselves from it.

Nothing could lie further from the purpose of writers of this tendency, of course, than to justify faith in the superhuman nature of Jesus. Of nothing are they more firmly convinced than that Jesus was merely a man. The whole object of their particular reading of the history of the Jewish Messianic ideal is, indeed, to smooth the way for a credible account of the immediate acceptance of Jesus by His followers as a superhuman being, although He was really only human. The pre-Christian conception of the Messiah, they say, involved the ascription to Him of a superhuman nature, and the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah, therefore, necessarily carried with it the ascription to Him of a superhuman nature.[12] But one of the results of this point of view is, naturally, that the mind is released from the prepossessions which formerly hindered recognition of traces of belief in a superhuman Messiah in the earlier Jewish literature. Hermann Gunkel, for example, having con-

[10] "Die jüdische Apokalyptik," p. 59.

[11] "Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des Neuen Testaments," 1903, p. 93.

[12] Cf. W. Wrede, "Paul," E. T. 1907, pp. 151 ff.; H. Weinel, "Saint Paul," E. T. 1906, p. 313.

cluded that the conception of the heavenly Christ must have arisen somewhere before the New Testament, and having found traces of it in the Jewish Apocalypses, is able to see something like it also, centuries earlier, in the prophets.[13] Traits of a Radicals Concede mythical God-King shine through the picture which the Prophets draw of the Messiah. "He receives already in Isaiah names which belong literally to no man — God-Hero, Father of Eternity (Is. ix. 5); He is the King of the Golden Age, in which sheep and wolf lie down together (Is. xi.); especially striking is it that His birth is celebrated with various mysterious statements (Is. ix. 5, Mic. v. 2) — for a just-born human child cannot aid His people, though perhaps a Divine child can. It is observable that other prophets and many Psalmists speak of a God, who is to be King of the whole world; that is, Jahveh, whose coronation and ascension (Ps. xlvii. 6, 9; lvii. 12) in the End-time are sung especially by many Psalmists." And so, he adds, we can feel no sort of wonder "when we meet in the later Apocalypses with a heavenly figure who is sometime to descend from heaven and establish a blessed kingdom on earth. This figure of the divine king is no new creation of Apocalyptic Judaism. It is the same figure which already lies at the basis of the prophetic hope."[14] The appeal to such passages as Ps. xlv. 6; ii. 7; cx. 1; xcvi. 11–13, as indications that the Messiah was thought of by the Psalmists as a superhuman being may now, then, hope for a more sympathetic hearing, in critical circles, than could be expected for it fifty years ago.

It undoubtedly does not make for edification to observe the expedients which have been resorted to by expositors to escape recognizing that these Psalms do ascribe a superhuman nature and superhuman powers to the Messiah. What they Ps. 45:6 have done with Ps. xlv. 6 — to take it as an example[15] — "in order to avoid the addressing of the king with the word *Elohim*," as Franz Delitzsch puts it,[16] may be conveniently glanced at in the summary statement given by J. A. Selbie.[17] Rather than take it as it stands, they would prefer, it seems, to translate vilely, "Thy throne is God," "Thy throne of God," "Thy throne is of God," or to rewrite the text and make it say something else, — "Thy throne [its foundation is firmly fixed], God [has established it]," or "Thy throne [shall be] for ever."[18] Even Franz Delitzsch who turns away from such violent avoidances,[19] can permit the Psalmist his own word, only if he may be allowed an equally violent reduction of its meaning. Because, immediately after addressing the King by the great name of "God," — a name which in this class of Psalms confessedly means just God and nothing else[20] — the Psalmist refers the King to "God, thy God," Delitzsch supposes that the Psalmist must use "God" when applied to the King in some lowered sense. "Since elsewhere earthly authorities," he reasons,

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[13] *Op. cit.*, p. 93.

[14] *Op. cit.*, pp. 24–25.

[15] The helplessness with which they face the passage is illustrated by the note of G. S. Goodspeed, "Israel's Messianic Hope," 1900, p. 69.

[16] "Psalms," E. T. ii. p. 82. The spirit in which expositors approach the

> are also called *Elohim* (Ex. xxi. 6; xxii. 7 ff.; Ps. lxxxii, cf. cxxxviii, 1) because they are God's representatives and the bearers of His image upon earth, so the king who is celebrated in this Psalm may be all the more readily styled *Elohim,* when in his heavenly beauty, his irresistible doxa or glory, and his divine holiness, he seems to the Psalmist to be the perfected realization of the close relationship in

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matter is illustrated by the remark of J. H. Kurtz, "Zur Theologie der Psalmen," 1865, pp. 52 f.: if "God" *can* be taken in a lower sense here, it *must.* Kurtz wishes to translate, "Thy throne of God."

[17] Hastings' *B.D.* iv. pp. 756–757.

[18] T. K. Cheyne, "The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter," 1891, pp. 181–182, while adopting the penultimate of these expedients, makes himself somewhat merry over the rest. In his "The Book of Psalms," 1904, i. p. 198, he has eliminated the verse and no longer considers the (mutilated) Psalm to be addressed to an earthly king. "It has now," he says, "become superfluous to look for a contemporary king as the hero of the poem. . . ." It is "really a Messianic poem; the King, as the Targum says, is 'King Messiah.'" It is a "description of the ideal King."

[19] That is to say in his "Commentary on the Psalms." In his later "Messianic Prophecy," 1891, E. T. p. 115, he appears to accept the rendering, "Thy throne of God" as probable.

[20] Delitzsch himself says: "It is certainly true that the custom with the Elohim Psalms of using *Elohim* as of equal dignity with Jahve is not favorable to this supposition."

> which God has set David and his seed to Himself. He calls Him *Elohim* just as Isaiah calls the exalted royal child, whom he exultingly salutes in Ch. ix. 1–6, *'El Gibbōr.* He gives Him this name, because in the transparent exterior of His fair humanity, he sees the glory and holiness of God as having attained a salutary or merciful conspicuousness among men. At the same time, however, he guards this calling of the king by the name of *Elohim* against being misapprehended, by immediately distinguishing the God, who stands above him, from the divine king, by the words "*Elohim,* Thy God," which, in the Korahitic Psalms, and in the Elohimic Psalms in general, is equivalent to "Jahve, thy God" (xliii. 4; xlviii. 15; l. 7), and the two words are accordingly united by *Munach.*

Delitzsch does not believe, indeed, that when this is said, all has been said. According to his view, this was all that the writer of the Psalm meant; he was as far as possible from assigning Deity in any sense to the King he was addressing; he applies the term "God" to Him only in a lower sense of the word. But "the Church," in adopting this Psalm into its sacred use, attached another meaning to it, referring a song "which took its origin from some passing occasion, as a song for all ages, to the great King of the future, the goal of its hope." Its prophetically Messianic sense was "therefore not the original sense of the Psalm," though it was very ancient,[21] and was, indeed, conferred upon it by its admission into the Psalter.[22]

It is a refreshing return to common sense when the new critical school renounces these artificialities of interpretation, and begins by recognizing that the Psalmist in calling the King "God," means precisely what he says, namely to ascribe the Divine name to the King he is addressing. The sense is quite clear, says Hermann Gunkel,[23] and we must not follow the

[21] How ancient we may learn from the remark: "Just as Ezek. xxi. 32 refers back to שילֹה, Gen. xlix. 10, *'El Gibbōr,* among the names of the Messiah in Is. ix. 6 (cf. Zech. xii. 8) refers back in a similar manner to Ps. xlv. 5."

[22] "Psalms," E. T. ii. pp. 73–74; cf. i. p. 67 and especially p. 70; also "Hebrews," E. T. i. p. 77, "Messianic Prophecy," E. T. p. 114.

[23] Ausgewählte Psalmen,"[2] 1911, pp. 106 f. Similarly H. Gressmann, "Der Ursprung der israelitisch-jüdischen Eschatologie," 1905, pp. 255–256.

multitude in explaining it away, and much less in altering the text. But, having recognized so much, Gunkel stops right there. The Messianic understanding of the Psalm (although that not only of the New Testament but of Judaism as well, from at least the time of the LXX), cannot come into consideration "for our scientific interpretation." Just an Israelitish king is meant, very likely Jeroboam II. That he is called "God" by the Psalmist is merely a solitary survival of a habit of speech common in the nations surrounding Israel, and, as we see here, not without its examples in Israel. "Veneration of kings as Gods was not rare in the ancient East; we are not surprized, therefore, that such a declaration meets us just once on the lips of an Israelitish singer. There was, no doubt, in ancient Israel a strong opposing current against such deification of the ruler; the genuine Jahve-religion, as it was advocated by the prophets, wishes that Jahve alone shall be God, and speaks with horror of everything human that would place itself by His side." We may learn from a passage like this, however,

> that the distinction between the Divine and the human was not always and everywhere in Israel perfectly strictly conceived. There are many other passages also in which God and king are spoken of in the same breath; in which the king is compared with God or His angel; or in which he is called God's Son; and when Solomon built himself a throne, which stood on six steps flanked by lions, he imitated in it the throne of the highest God of heaven who sits high aloft above the seven heavenly stages, guarded by demons. Such a declaration as the singer's shows us, then, that there were tendencies approaching heathenism in ancient Israel, especially in the palace. In Israel, as elsewhere, it belonged to the court-style to promise an eternal dominion to the king, or eternal life to his house.

Hugo Gressmann[24] so far agrees with this, that he supposes that, in Ps. xlv. 6, we have a solitary "survival from a period when it was more customary in Israel to call the king God"; "although," he adds, "the usage had perhaps never been very common." But he improves upon it by thinking of

[24] *Op. cit.*, pp. ff.

this custom as really little more than an instance of an inflated court-style, which had become acclimated in Israel, too, on the basis of general oriental models. The language which is employed of the king in such Psalms as the Second, Forty-fifth, Seventy-second and Hundred-and-tenth, cannot be taken literally, of course, of any earthly monarch. But, says Gressmann, it was never intended to be taken literally. It is merely the language of court-flattery and was fully understood to mean nothing. This was the language in which kings had been spoken of and to, say in Babylon, from of old. It had found its way, no doubt indirectly, possibly through Phoenicia, into Israel; and had been popularized there merely as a matter of court-form. Of course, it was gradually modified, in its Israelitish use, in the direction of an ever closer assimilation of it to the Israelitish point of view. The deification of the king, for example, regular in the case of the Babylonian-Assyrian kings and a dogma in Egypt, was more and more eliminated from the court-style as it was employed in Israel. "In the whole Old Testament, the (reigning) King is addressed only a single time by the title of God: 'Thy throne, O God, stands for ever and ever'" (Ps. xlv. 6). Other remnants of similarly inflated flattery have, however, better maintained their place. World-wide dominion is promised to the king; eternal life and power are ascribed to him; he is presented as the (adopted) Son of God. All such modes of speech are merely relics of a court-style which originated elsewhere, and which, as used in Israel, was without meaning. "From the technical designation of the king as Son of God (II Sam. vii. 14, Ps. ii. 7) no inferences can be drawn as to the deification of the king. For it was merely the style to speak thus of the king, and, when it is the style to speak thus, nobody asks whether it has any meaning or not."[25] "The style permits the court-poet to praise any and every king as a world-ruler, even though the world which he really rules be no bigger than Israel."[26] What we learn from such language is not how Israel thought of its king, and much less how Israel thought of its Messiah.

[25] P. 256.

[26] P. 262.

There is no reference to the Messiah in this language; and Israel did not think thus of its king. What we learn is only where Israel got its court-style, and how that court-style was slowly modified in its use in Israel, to suit Israelitish modes of conception, until it was at last almost cleansed of its assimilation of the monarch to God.

The parallel between Delitzsch's and Gressmann's treatments of Ps. xlv. 6 should not be missed. Both start with the recognition that the Psalmist addresses the king as "God." Both set themselves at once to empty that fact of its significance. Delitzsch pursues a philological method, and concludes that, in such a connection, "God" does not mean God, but rather something which is not God. Gressmann follows the religio-historical method, and concludes that, in such instances, "God" means just nothing at all; it is mere bombast. That the view taken of the Psalm by either was not the view taken of it by those who gave it a place in the Psalter, at least, each is compelled to allow. It owes its place in the Psalter in fact, as neither would deny, precisely to its not having been understood to speak meaninglessly, or even moderately, of any earthly king, but, in the loftiest of ascriptions, of King Messiah. The question which presses for answer is whether it is possible thus to evacuate the language of the Psalm of its meaning. That Gressmann's method of evacuating it has some tactical advantage over that of the "psychological school" may be admitted. He is at least relieved from the necessity of accounting for the language employed from the Psalmist's own experience. He avoids so far, therefore, the impact of the pointed questions of Ernst Sellin:[27] "When did an Anointed of Juda ever have dominion over the peoples of the earth, against which they could rebel? When were the ends of the earth really promised by God to such an one, for his possession (Ps. ii.)? When and how could a king of Israel be called 'God,' and his sons be constituted princes over the whole world, as is done in Ps. xlv. 7, 17; when did such an one rule from the Euphrates to the end of the earth, like the king of lxxii. 8; and finally

[27] "Der alttestamentliche Prophetismus," 1912, p. 169.

when did such an one lead a host out of the dew of the morning and hold judgment among the peoples like him of cx. 6?" But what advantage is it to escape these questions, only to fall into the way of the still more pointed one, When was it possible in Israel to ascribe to its kings *simpliciter* such Divine qualities and functions? Or, as Sellin sharply puts it, How could a king in Israel be directly addressed as God, as in Ps. xlv. 6?[28]

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Is it adequate to say that it was natural for Israel to imitate the court-style of its neighbors, and that this court-style in its Israelitish employment had worn itself down, through long years of use, into a mere set of meaningless words? Kings had not existed in Israel for ever and ever; and Israel differed from the surrounding nations precisely in this — that there was but one God in Israel, and the king was not this God. "The deification of princes is everywhere else directly perhorrescent in Israel," remarks Sellin, and declares that there is but one solution possible: "a hymn which celebrated the Divine World-Savior is taken as the basis of a wedding-song addressed to an earthly king, and he is lauded as the introducer of the new age, which this world-savior is expected sometime to introduce."[29] That is to say, on the foundation of the new religio-historical point of view, Sellin returns in effect (although not altogether without defect, it must be allowed) to the old typical-messianic method of interpreting these Psalms.[30]

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[28] Cf. T. K. Cheyne, "The Origin and Religious Contents of the Psalter," 1891, p. 181: "But from the severely monotheistic Jewish point of view, to represent this king as God, was impossible (Zech. xii. 8 is no proof to the contrary)." Also Gunkel, when speaking of Ps. xx. writes ("Ansgewählte Psalmen,"^{3} p. 41 f.): "The piety is accordingly clear, which guards the singer from glorifying the king too much. This tone dominates also the other Royal Songs (xx. xxi. lxxii. cx. ii.) contained in the Psalter; they do not, or at least not in the first rank, glorify the king, but the God who protects and blesses him; a somewhat different 'more heathenish' note sounds, on the other hand, in the very ancient song, Ps. xlv. The deification of the King which was at home in the ancient orient from primitive times, was certainly an abomination to these pious people."

[29] "Die israelitisch-jüdische Heilandserwartung," 1909, p. 16 (the second and third parts of the fifth volume of the "Biblische Zeit- und Streitfragen").

[30] "Prophetismus," p. 129: "The right way to solve the riddle has been pointed out by Gunkel, though only by a modernization of what used to be

They speak of the contemporary kings, but through them they speak of the Great King yet to come. And their language can receive its full meaning only when it is read with reference to Him.

In order that we may apprehend Sellin's point of view, we shall need to have it before us in a somewhat broadened statement.[31] What we are particularly indebted to him for is the clearness with which he throws up to observation the main fact, that the center of Israel's eschatology lay in the settled expectation of the universal establishment of the reign of Jehovah. The way he puts it is, "Jahve is to come and simply be manifested as Lord — that is the kernel of the whole eschatology."[32] But alongside of this expectation there runs, he tells us, throughout the literature, the hope of the coming of a world-savior, the coming of whom is described in much the same language as the coming of Jehovah Himself. We may be tempted to identify the two after a fashion which will eliminate Jehovah's coming in favor of that of this savior: Jehovah comes only in His representative. The difficulty is that, in the documents, the identification goes beyond the coming to the figures themselves. Nor will it quite meet the case to say that Jehovah's representative is clothed with the attributes of Jehovah. The epithets given to Him pass beyond official identification and imply personal identity. And yet not such personal identity as excludes all distinction, or even all subordination.

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contended for by Franz Delitzsch and others, when they said that David was here always the type of the Messiah. Hymns were written by court-poets to actual Israelitish or Jewish kings, on the occasion of their coronation or marriage, which transferred to them the long existent hope of the divine world-savior, and these songs became also prophecies."

[31] An admirable account of Sellin's views in their historical setting has been given to the readers of *The Princeton Theological Review* (October, 1913, xi. pp. 630–649) by J. Oscar Boyd under the title of "The Source of Israel's Eschatology." W. Nowack's criticisms of the "Heilandserwartung" in the *Theologische Rundschau* for 1912, xv. pp. 91–96, and of the "Prophetismus" in the same Journal for 1914, xvii. pp. 65–68, are also worth consulting.

[32] "Prophetismus," p. 174. Cf. p. 172: "The coming of God as Lord and King, we have already presented as the kernel of the Old-Israelitish Eschatology of woe and weal."

We are confronted in this figure with a problem very similar to that which meets us in the mysterious figure of the Angel of Jehovah and similar methods of solving it will naturally occur to us. Now, as Sellin makes clear, this figure of a world-savior is both original and aboriginal in Israel. It was not, as Gunkel and Gressmann imagine, derived at a comparatively late date from the myths of Israel's oriental neighbors. The myths of Israel's oriental neighbors, in point of fact, knew nothing of such a figure. " The old-oriental literature," writes Sellin,[33] " has been searched with the greatest zeal, especially during the last decade for traces of a hope of a Divine Savior, of a new era of salvation to be brought in by him, and a return of Paradise. . . . But I hold it to be my duty to say at once without reserve, that not the slightest trace of proof has been adduced, that this era is to be introduced by a great and miraculous Divine-human ruler of the End-time. Absolutely all that has been said, up to today, of an old-oriental ' expectation of a redeemer-king ' is merely construction, — or, where is there a Babylonian or Egyptian text which speaks of such a future redeemer as Jacob's blessing speaks of Shiloh, — and the like? . . . *The eschatological king is not known by the ancient orient.*" [34] It is quite possible that in expounding and adorning its expectation, Israel may have employed figures and conceptions derived from without. But the expectation itself is certainly its own. " The specifically Israelitish character and the original parentage of its kernel are firmly established; and its roots are not set in mythology but in the religion of Israel, in Israel's belief in the God of Sinai, to whom in the end the world must belong." [35]

Throughout the whole course of the history of Israel, we may trace this expectation of a Savior running parallel with the fundamental expectation of the coming of God as Ruler and King. The parallel is very complete.

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[33] P. 175 f.

[34] We observe that even Meinhold thanks Sellin for saying this: " I am glad that Sellin declares strongly and clearly that ' the eschatological king is not known to the ancient orient ' — naturally Israel excepted " (" Theolog. Literaturzeitung," 1913, 19, 580).

[35] P. 183.

> " He too is the ruler over the peoples (Gen. xlix. 10; Ps. lxxii. 11), to the ends of the earth (Deut. xxxiii. 17; Mic. v. 3; Zech. ix. 10 f.), the scepter-bearer over the nations (Num. xxiv. 17–19; Ps. xlv. 17) to whose dominion there are no limits (Is. ix. 6), etc.; he too bears sometimes but not often the title of " King " (Ps. xlv. 2; lxxii. 1; Zech. ix. 9; Jer. xxiii. 5), elsewhere those of " Judge " (Mic. v. 1), " Father " (Is. ix. 5), " Anointed " or " Son of Jehovah " (Ps. ii. 2, 7). Precisely as the activity of the one, so that of the other is three-fold: it is his to destroy the enemies (Num. xxiv. 17 b; Deut. xxxiii. 17; Ps. ii. 9; xlv. 6; cx. 1, 2, 5); he has to judge (Is. ix. 6 b; xi. 3; Jer. xxiii. 5 b; Ps. lxxii. 6); and finally he has to " save " (Zech. ix. 9; Jer. xxiii. 6; Ps. lxxii. 4, 12), above all by bringing social betterment, Paradise, and universal peace (Gen. xlix. 11, 12; Is. vii. 15; xi. 4, 6–9; Mic. iv. 4 a, 5 b; Zech. iii. 9 b, 10; ix. 10; Ps. lxxii. 12, 16).[36] . . . Moreover he is given a name, " Immanuel," by which his appearance is notified as the fulfilment of Balaam's prophecy of the end of the days, " Jahve, his God, is with him "; and he is further designated as " Star " (Num. xxiv. 17), as " God-Hero " (Is. ix. 5), as " God's Son " (Ps. ii. 7); . . . [and] exegesis is continually bringing us back to the idea that Is. vii. 14, Mic. v. 2 assume thoroughly a miraculous birth for him without the aid of a man; . . . [and] there is promised to him when scarcely born, the dominion of the world (Gen. xlix. 10; Is. ix. 5; Mic. v. 3).[37]

The kernel of the whole matter is this:[38] " Israel's savior is, throughout the whole course of the Old Testament history the counterpart of the World-God who is sometime to bring woe and weal; precisely as of the one, so of the other there sounds out — from the oldest to the latest sources — although, no doubt with external differences, the mighty 'He comes' (cf. Gen. xlix. 10), 'He appears' (Num. xxiv. 17), 'He cometh' (Zech. ix. 9), 'He is born' (Is. vii. 14, ix. 4), 'He comes forth' (xi. 1), 'He comes forth' (Mic. v. 1), 'He is raised up' (Jer. xxiii. 5), 'until He comes' (Ez. xxi. 32), 'I will raise up' (xxxiv. 23), 'I bring' (Zech. iii. 8), 'I saw, there come' (Dan. vii. 13)." This continually recurring assurance that the Paradise-prince will come to destroy all enemies and judge even to the ends of the earth, forms the deepest core of the mystery — it is expressed by a single word in Hebrew, יָבוֹא, in English, "He comes."[39] It stamps the religion of the Old Testament as specifically a religion of hope. "Yes, for us the Old Testament religion, from the very beginning is a religion of hope, prepared from the very beginning sometime to become the world-religion; the Old Testament God from the beginning the God of heaven and earth; who, it is true, first of all chose only that one people, but looked forward to the day when He should destroy all other Gods and bring all other peoples to His feet."[40] It is from Sinai, and from the revelation-act at Sinai alone that this religion of hope can have derived. "Here, and only here, can a foundation be laid for viewing the whole history from the point of sight of waiting for the appearance of the world-God, who is to fill the universe with His glory."[41] But as no man could look upon this His glory and live, an organ for its manifestation was necessary, and a type of this organ was given in the Paradisiacal man, who, though a creature of God, was made in the image of the Divine glory and destined for communion with Him and the enjoyment of dominion over the world. Back to this figure, the old-oriental directed his eyes. "But in the old-Israelitish eschatology, this backwards directed longing became suddenly something wholly different — a clear, distinct, religiously oriented, historical expectation directed to the future: Jahve, the God of Sinai, will Himself, in this man, who, no doubt, is a creature, but who was with Him before the mountains were, — in this, His Chosen-One, His Servant, His Son — Himself come to establish the world-dominion, to judge Israel, and the peoples, to bring Paradise and the world-peace. There is no parallel to this assured confidence in the ancient orient."[42]

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[36] Pp. 172–173.

[37] P. 173.

[38] P. 181.

There are elements in this brilliant piece of constructive work which will require correction. The use made of the Paradisiacal man in the account given of the origin of Israel's expectation of a Savior, and the apparently defective Christology in part founded upon this, attract dissenting attention. But this ought not to blind us to the value of the broad pres-

[39] P. 193. [40] P. 192. [41] P. 182. [42] P. 182.

entation given us here of the eschatological hope of Israel, including, as it does, the correlation of the hope of the coming Savior with the hope of what we have been accustomed to speak of as "the advent of Jehovah." It has been usual to separate these two things mechanically and to set them over against one another as quite independent, and indeed never even osculating, items of Israel's belief.[43] Gunkel even represents them as mutually exclusive. "In the whole eschatology," he says,[44] "we can distinguish two tendencies, both of which speak of a coming King; whereas the one calls the king David or David's Son, in the other Jahve Himself in the Ruler of the future; everywhere where God's kingdom is spoken of, the human king is lacking, for a 'Messiah' has no place in 'God's kingdom.'" Charles A. Briggs, while he does not go so far as to represent these two elements of Old Testament eschatology as mutually contradictory, yet thinks, equally extremely, of the whole body of Old Testament Messianic hopes as a congeries of unharmonized items standing off in isolation from one another. "There are in the Old Testament," he says,[45] "two distinct lines of Messianic idea — the one predicting the advent of God for redemption and judgment, the other predicting the advent of a redemptive man. The redemptive man is conceived sometimes as the Seed of the Woman or Seed of Abraham, as the Lion of Judah, as the Second Moses, as the Son of David, the Son of God, the Messiah, as the Martyr Servant, as the Priest King, as the Martyr Shepherd, as the Son of Man. It is impossible to combine these in any unity, so far as the Old Testament is concerned. And there is not the slightest indication that there is any coincidence of the line of the divine advent with the line of the advent of any of these human Messiahs." The effect of a comprehensive presentation of the material like Sellin's is thoroughly to do away with such impressions. The complete synthesis of the various representations waits, of course, for the fulfilment of them all in one Person. But it becomes clear at least that the hope of the coming of the world-savior, which includes in it the more specifically defined " Messianic " hope, is but another aspect of the hope of the coming of Jehovah to judge the world and to introduce the eternal kingdom of peace. One of the results of this is that the testimony of the Old Testament to " the transcendent Messiah " becomes pervasive. We no longer look for it in a text here and there which we are tempted to explain away as unexpected, perhaps intolerable, exaggerations, but rather see it involved in the entire drift of the eschatological expectations of the Old Testament, and view the special texts in which it finds particularly poignant expression as only the natural high lights thrown up upon the surface of the general picture.

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[43] E.g. E. Riehm, "Messianic Prophecy," E. T.^{2} 1891, p. 282, supporting himself on Oehler, "Prolegomena zur Theologie des A. T.," pp. 67 f. and art. "Messias," in Herzog's "Realencyklopädie," pp. 408 f. So also Ottley, Hastings' *B.D.* ii. p. 459a, repeating Riehm.

[44] "Ausgewählte-Psalmen,"^{3} pp. 191 f.

[45] "The Incarnation of the Word," 1902, p. 173.

This underlying coalescence of the advent of Messiah and the advent of Jehovah is perhaps more commonly vaguely felt than is generally recognized. It seems to be thus felt — in his own way and from his own point of view, of course, — by Gressmann.[46]

mann's concession

> In the Israelitish eschatology [he writes] the Messiah and Jahve alternate. That is already intelligible, because the Messiah is ultimately a Divine figure, a God-king, and is thus elevated into the sphere of Deity. It becomes more intelligible when we observe a second parallel fact. Almost everywhere where Jahve meets us in the eschatology of weal, He is presented in a quite distinctive way. We can refer the descriptions which are given of Him and the functions which are ascribed to Him to the conception of the eschatological king. With respect to the thing, not to the person, the Jahve here described and the Messiah were originally as it seems counterparts: the functions of the two are still almost identical. The Messiah is described more as a King exalted into God, Jahve more as God exalted into the King. It is no doubt possible that in the eschatology which influenced the Israelitish religion, a single figure which united in itself the traits of both, occupied a middle ground. In its passage to Israel this figure was divided, and the one, the more divine, side

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[46] " Der Ursprung," etc., p. 294.

> of its being was assigned to Jahve, the other, the more human side of its being to the Messiah. The eschatological hero, which originally bore rich mythical traits, that are still perceptible in the older prophecy, up to Isaiah and Micah, is in the course of time ever more degraded into an earthly king, and acquired a purely national character. Jahve, however, was inhibited from this development, since He could not lose the Divine type. Accordingly we may perhaps again ascribe to the *original* eschatological figure the things which in the *present* tradition are no longer said of the Messiah, but only now of Jahve.[47]

Such a speculation cannot commend itself to sober thought; but the fact that it suggests itself to Gressmann hints of what he finds in the Old Testament descriptions of the Messiah, and of the relation which the hope of His coming bore to the hope of the advent of Jehovah, and indeed which His person bore to the person of Jehovah. He who reads the Old Testament, however cursorily, will not escape a sense, however dim, that he is brought into contact in it with a Messiah who is more than human in the fundamental basis of His being, and in whose coming Jehovah visits His people in some more than representative sense.

It is naturally the customary representation of Franz Delitzsch that the two lines of prediction never meet in the pages of the Old Testament, but wait for their conjunction until He to whom they both point had come. Says he:[48]

Delitzsch's concession

> For the announcement of salvation in the Old Testament runs on two parallel lines: the one has for its termination the Anointed of Jahve, who rules all nations out of Zion; the other the Lord Himself, sitting above the Cherubim, to whom all the earth does homage. These two lines do not meet in the Old Testament; it is only the fulfilment that makes it plain, that the advent of the Anointed One and the advent of Jahve is one and the same. . . . An allegory may serve to illustrate the way in which the Old Testament proclamation of salvation unfolds itself. The Old Testament in relation to the Day of the New Testament is Night. In this Night there rise in opposite directions, two stars of Promise. The one describes its path from

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[47] P. 301.

[48] "Psalms," E. T. i. p. 67 f., cf. p. 70.

> above downwards; it is the promise of Jahve who is about to come. The other describes its path from below upwards: it is the hope which rests on the seed of David, the prophecy of the Son of David, which at the outset assumes a thoroughly human and merely earthly character. These two stars meet at last, they blend together into one star: the Night vanishes and it is Day. This one Star is Jesus Christ, Jahve and the Son of David in one person, the King of Israel and at the same time the Redeemer of the world — in a word, the God-man! [49]

Elsewhere however he speaks with a juster divination: [50]

> We find indeed undeniable traces in the Old Testament of a prophetic *presentiment* that the great Messias of the future, who was destined to accomplish what had been vainly looked for in David and Solomon, etc., should also present in His own person an unexampled union of human and divine. The mystery of the incarnation is still veiled under the Old Testament, and yet the two great lines of prophecy running through it — one leading on to a final manifestation of Jehovah, the other to the advent of a Son of David — do so meet and coalesce at certain points, as by the light thus generated, to burst through the veil. This is as clear as day in the one passage, Is. ix. 5, where the Messias is plainly called אל גבור (the Mighty God), an ancient traditional appellation for the Most High (Deut. x. 17; cf. Jer. xxxii. 8; Neh. ix. 32; Ps. xxiv. 8). And so (Jer. xxiii. 6) He is entitled " Jehovah our righteousness," following which, as Biesenthal has shown (p. 7), the ancient synagogue recognized Jehovah (יהוה) as one of the names of the Messiah.[51]

That the New Testament writers throughout proceed on the assumption that all those Old Testament passages in which the Advent of Jehovah is spoken of refer to the coming of the Messiah, Delitzsch himself is led to tell us when commenting

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[49] " Psalms," E. T. ii. p. 300 (on Ps. lxxii). Cf. the similar statement of W. T. Davidson, in Hastings' *B.D.* iv. p. 151. Delitzsch seems to imply that it is only to Jehovah and not to the Messiah that the function of Savior is ascribed (cf. G. Dalman, " Words of Jesus," p. 295); this can be sustained only if we take the term " the Messiah " in too narrow a sense.

[50] " Hebrews," E. T. i. p. 79.

[51] Cf. on this Messianic title, A. Edersheim, " The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah,"^{1} 1883, i. p. 178, who gives the references.

N.T. usage

on the catena of passages adduced in the first chapter of Hebrews in support of the Deity of Christ, among which are some of this kind.[52] Their consciousness of the identity of the two comings "finds an utterance," as Delitzsch reminds us, "at the very threshold of the evangelical history." (Lk. i. 17, 26) when Malachi's prediction of the coming of Elijah "before the day of Jehovah" to prepare His way, is adduced as fulfilled in John the Baptist the forerunner of Jesus.[53] We shall at once recall also the similar appeal of all three of the Synoptic Gospels to Is. xl~~iii~~. 3, as fulfilled in John the Baptist. In Jesus they saw all the lines of Messianic prediction converge; and they declare Him no less the Jehovah who was expected to come to save His people, than the Son of David or the Suffering Servant of God. "When St. Mark tells us," remarks Charles A. Briggs justly, "that St. John the Baptist was the herald of the advent of Yahweh, at the beginning of the Gospel, what else can he mean than that Jesus Christ whose redemptive life is the theme of his Gospel was the very Yahweh?" And, we add, what can he mean except that, in predicting this advent of Jehovah, Isaiah was proclaming the Deity of the Messiah in whose coming it was to be fulfilled? The same is true also, of course, of Matthew and Luke in their parallel passages, so that Briggs is thoroughly justified[54] in summing up "with confidence" in the remark that "the three Synoptic Evangelists agree in thinking of Jesus Christ as the Yahweh of the Old Testament, and that His advent, as heralded by St. John the Baptist, was the Divine advent of the Second Isaiah, as well as the human advent of the Servant of Yahweh; in other words that they saw in Jesus Christ the Messiah of history, the coincidence of the line of the divine redeemer with the line of the human Messiah; that they saw all the Messianic ideals combine in Him." The only difference between John and the other Evangelists here is that the identification of the Baptist with the voice crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of Jehovah," which the others make on their own account, John quotes from the lips of the Baptist. Briggs thinks the identification can scarcely have been made by the Baptist.[55] Such a judgment is certainly rash in view of the exalted conception which the Baptist in any event expresses of Him whose mere forerunner he undoubtedly recognizes himself as being. His shoe-latchets he declares himself unworthy to unloose; he calls Him the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world; he even gives Him the great name of the Son of God — a name which in this context must surely bear its metaphysical sense (cf. verses 7 and 25). Beginning on this note, the New Testament proceeds throughout its whole extent on the unchanging supposition that in the coming of Jesus Christ there is fulfilled the repeated Old Testament promise, made in Psalm and Prophet alike, that God is to visit His people, in His own good time, to save them. It is therefore, indeed, so we are told, that He is called Jesus, — precisely because "it is He that shall save His people from their sins" — He, that is, Jesus, shall save His people, that is, Jesus' people, — in fulfilment of the promise of the Saving Jehovah.

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[52] "Hebrews," E. T. i. pp. 71–72.

[53] Cf. A. B. Davidson, "Old Testament Prophecy," 1913, p. 412. Cf. also pp. 311 and 147.

[54] P. 182.

Is. 9:6

Among the high lights thrown up on the surface of the general picture of the Divine Messiah, as it lies on the pages of the Old Testament, such a passage as Is. ix. 6 challenges attention with the same insistency as Ps. xlv. 6, and has met with much the same treatment at the hands of the expositors. There have always been some, of course, who have not shrunk from reading the passage as it stands, and giving it its obvious meaning. Outstanding instances are supplied by E. W. Hengstenberg and J. A. Alexander. Alexander, speaking of the hypothesis that by the child mentioned by the prophet, Hezekiah is meant — an hypothesis once much in vogue, but now out of date — and the unnatural explanations of particular terms which it compelled, writes:[56]

Alexander

> The necessity of such explanations is sufficient to condemn the exegetical hypothesis involving it, and shows that this hypothesis

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[55] P. 171.

[56] "Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah," 1874, i. p. 204.

> has only been adopted to avoid the natural and striking application of the words to Jesus Christ, as the promised *child*, emphatically *born for us* and *given to us*, as the *Son* of God, and the *Son* of man, as being *wonderful* in his person, works, and *sufferings* — a *counsellor*, prophet, and authoritative teacher of the truth, a wise administrator of the Church, and confidential adviser of the individual believer — a real man and yet the *mighty God* — eternal in his own existence, and the *giver of eternal life* to others — the great *peacemaker* between God and man, between Jew and Gentile, the umpire between nations, the abolisher of war, and the giver of internal peace to all who *being justified by faith have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Rom. v. 1). The doctrine that this prophecy relates to the Messiah was not disputed even by the Jews, until the virulence of the anti-Christian controversy drove them from the ground which their own progenitors had steadfastly maintained. In this departure from the truth they have been followed by some learned writers who are Christians only in the name, and to whom may be applied with little alteration, what one of them (Gesenius) has said with respect to the ancient versions of this very text, viz., that the general meaning put upon it may be viewed as the criterion of a Christian and an anti-Christian writer.

Hengstenberg's remarks we prefer to give through the medium of T. K. Cheyne, who, in one of the stages of his ever-shifting opinion, adopts the core of them as his own. In an essay on "The Christian Element in the Book of Isaiah," Cheyne remarks:[57]

> Both parts of Isaiah give us to understand clearly (and not as a mere ὑπόνοια) that the agent of Jehovah in the work of government and redemption is himself divine. Not indeed the much vexed passage in iv. 2, where, even if the date of this prophecy allowed us to suppose an allusion to the Messiah, "sprout of Jehovah" is much too vague a phrase to be a synonym of "God's Only-begotten Son." But the not less famous *'El Gibbōr* in ix. 6 may and must still be quoted. As Hengstenberg remarks it "can only signify God-Hero, a Hero who is infinitely exalted above all human heroes by the circumstance that he is *God*. To the attempts at weakening the import of the name, the passage x. 21, [where *'El Gibbōr* is used of

Hengstenberg

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[57] "The Prophecies of Isaiah,"³ 1884, ii. p. 209.

Jehovah] appears a very inconvenient obstacle." [58] And who can doubt that, granting the subject of chap. liii. to be an individual, he must be the incarnation of the Divine?

Cheyne

Cheyne's direct comment on the passage itself in this work needs to be read in the light of these remarks to preserve it from ambiguity; but he doubtless means it to be taken in much the same sense which he unambiguously expresses here. "The meaning of the phrase," he declares,[59] "is defined by x. 21, where it occurs again of Jehovah"; that is to say, the Messiah is declared to be God in the same sense in which Jehovah is God. When he proceeds to say, "It would be uncritical to infer that Isaiah held the metaphysical oneness of the Messiah and Jehovah," he does not require to mean more than that Isaiah is not to be inferred to have as yet clearly formulated in his mind the doctrine of the Trinity, — and need not be supposed to have adjusted in his thinking the Deity of the Messiah to the fundamental doctrine of the unity of the Godhead. But when he goes on to say, "But he evidently does conceive the Messiah, somewhat as the Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians regarded their kings, as an earthly representation of Divinity (see on xiv. 13–14)," the comparison, although probably inevitable, yet tends to lower the conception of *'El Gibbōr* beyond its power to stretch. Accordingly Cheyne continues: "No doubt this development of the Messianic doctrine was accelerated by contact with foreign nations; still it is in harmony with fundamental Biblical ideas and expressions. This particular title of the Messiah is, no doubt, unique. But if even a Davidic king may be described as 'sitting upon the throne of Jehovah' (I Chr. xxix. 23), and the Davidic family be said, in a predictive passage it is true, to be 'as God (*ēlohīm*), as the (or, an) angel of Jehovah' (Zech. xii. 8), much more may similar titles be applied to the Messiah. The last comparison would, indeed, be especially suitable to the Messiah, and it is a little strange that we do not find it." So far the tendency seems to be to lower the implication of the title,[60] but the lost ground is now recovered: "But we do find the Messiah, in a well-known Psalm, invited to sit at the right hand of Jehovah (Ps. cx. 1), and it is only a step further to give him the express title, 'God the Mighty One.' It is no doubt a very great title. The word selected for 'God' is not *ēlohīm,* which is applied to the judicial authority (Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 8), to Moses (Ex. vii. 1), and to the apparition of Samuel (I Sam. xxviii. 13); but *el* which, whenever it denotes (as it generally does; and in Isaiah always) Divinity, does so in an absolute sense; — it is never used hyperbolically or metaphorically." [61]

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[58] "Christology of the Old Testament," Edinburgh ed., ii. p. 88.

[59] *Op cit.*, i. p. 61 f.

The thing most insisted upon by Cheyne in these remarks is that *'El Gibbōr* can mean nothing but "Mighty God"; as Is. x. 21 shows. It illustrates the uncertainty of touch which characterizes the "Liberal" criticism of this type, that, in his later book on Isaiah, he simply deserts this ground and explains *'El Gibbōr* as describing the ideal king as indued from on high with might, and comments somewhat blindly: "x. 21, which shows that we are not to render *divine hero;* the king seems to Isaiah in his lofty enthusiasm, like one of those *angels* (as we moderns call them), who, in old time were said to mix with men, and even contend with them, and who, as superhuman beings, were called by the name of *'el* (Gen. xxxii. 22–32)." If Is. x. 21, where Cheyne himself renders *'El Gibbōr,* "the Mighty God" (p. 23), shows that this term cannot be rendered "divine hero," but at least, as he himself renders it, "Mighty Divinity," — which seems synonymous with "Mighty God" — it is difficult to see how Isaiah by its use designates the ideal king (not now the Messiah) an angel and not a God. By reducing the person spoken of from the Messiah to the king, and the dignity ascribed to him from the Divine

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[60] In his later work: "The Book of the Prophet Isaiah: A New English Translation," 1898, p. 145, Cheyne actually lowers his view of the meaning of *'El Gibbōr.*

[61] Cf. Hengstenberg, "Christology," ii. p. 85 on the meaning of *'El* and the impossibility of rendering it (as Gesenius does) by "hero"; cf. also the citations given by J. D. Davis, in the "Princeton Biblical and Theological Studies," 1912, p. 99.

to the angelic rank, Cheyne has, no doubt, effectually removed the passage from the category of Old Testament testimonies to the Deity of the Messiah. But he appears to have done so only at the cost not only of some violence, but also of some confusion.

It is to attain this end that the exegesis of the "Old Liberal school" is particularly directed, and the exegesis seems patient of nearly any conclusion which falls short of ascribing Deity to the Messiah.[62] E. Kautzsch can lay it down dogmatically as a principle of exegesis, which must govern the rendering of *'El Gibbōr,* that "an absolute predication of Godhead, even in the case of the Messiah, would be inconceivable in the Old Testament."[63] He therefore denies that it is possible to take the term as "hero God," and insists on translating it "God of a hero," that is "Godlike hero." And George Adam Smith can actually permit himself to write such sentences as these:[64]

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> In any case the application of these prophecies to Jesus Christ must be made with discrimination. They have been too hastily used as predictions of the Godhead of the Messiah. But not even do the names in Chapter ix. 6, f. imply Deity; while all the functions attributed to the promised King are human. Isaiah's Messiah is an earthly monarch of the stock of David, and with offices that are political, both military and judicial. He is not the mediator of spiritual gifts to his people: forgiveness, a new knowledge of God and the like. It is only in this, that he saves the people of God from destruction and reigns over them with justice in the fear of God, that he can be regarded as a type of Jesus Christ.

We have only to place by the side of this an equally brief statement emanating from a newer school, for its marvellousness to strike the eye. Martin Brückner writes:[65]

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[62] The various senses which have been put upon the words *'El Gibbōr* have been collected and discussed by J. D. Davis, as cited, pp. 93–105.

[63] Hastings' *B.D.*, extra volume, 1904, p. 695b.

[64] "Modern Criticism and the Preaching of the Old Testament," 1901, p. 161; cf. Hastings' *B.D.*, ii. p. 491.

[65] "Die Entstehung der paulinischen Christologie," 1903, p. 97, note.

In any case "the old-prophetic Messiah-consciousness," for example, of Isaiah, would not be, on the assumption of the genuineness of his Christology, that of a "purely human King of David's line" but that of the Apocalyptic introducer of the blessed end-time. For a Messiah who reigns "without end" (ix. 6), who is called the God-Hero and the Eternal One, who is the personal concentration of the spirit (xi. 2 ff.), and destroys the wicked with the breath of his mouth (xi. 4), is not "purely human" but superhuman, wholly apart from this — that the kingdom over which he reigns is the miraculous kingdom of peace and blessedness, the splendor of which is the light of the benighted peoples (ix. 1 ff.; xi. 7 ff.).

Radicals + Conser
vative vs. Liberal

The several representatives of the "Old Liberal school" differ very much among themselves, of course, in details of interpretation. The thing which they are agreed upon is that the Messiah is called *'El Gibbōr* — whatever that may be made to mean — not because he is himself Divine, but because he is the representative of Jehovah on earth. It is allowed that the description given of him scales all the heights permissible to such a representative. "In the brilliant picture of chapter ix.," writes G. S. Goodspeed,[66] "the child who occupies the throne of David is to overthrow the enemy and to rule for ever and ever. The names which are given to him describe a personage more glorious than any prophet has hitherto mentioned, except perhaps the writer of Psalm xlv." But, however glorious, they fall short of declaring him divine. "These divine titles," writes James Crichton,[67] "do not necessarily" — what is the function of this "necessarily" here? — "imply that in the mind of the prophet the Messianic king is God in the metaphysical sense — the essense of the divine nature is not a dogmatic conception in the Old Testament" — surely a blind remark! — "but only that Jehovah is present in Him in perfect wisdom and power, so that He exercises over His people for ever a fatherly and peaceful rule." Perhaps, however, Eduard Riehm may still stand as the typical representative of

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[66] "Israel's Messianic Hope," 1900, p. 120.

[67] Orr's, "International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia," 1915, p. 2040.

this system of interpretation. The Messiah, says he,[68] is represented in Old Testament prophecy

> as a human king, an offspring from the stem of David, whose eminence is far above the position of all other men, and whose personality has about it something wonderful and mysterious. Although it is nowhere indicated that he is to enter the world in an extraordinary and wonderful manner,[69] he yet, as the earthly representative of the Divine King, and his instrument in establishing His kingdom, and exercising His government, stands in an absolutely unique and intimate relationship to God, Whose Spirit rests upon him as upon no other, and Whose almighty power, wisdom, righteousness and helpful grace work through him in such full measure that in and through his government God's great name, that is, His revealed glory is made known. In other words, God makes him the organ of His self-revelation, just as elsewhere He uses the " angel of Jehovah." Hence, even the divine designation *'El Gibbōr* (God-hero) is one of the names ascribed to him; and hence also, even in a more general announcement applied to the house of David, there occurs the expression: " it shall be as *God* and the *angel of Jehovah* before " the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Both in the kingdom of God and in humanity, the Messiah assumes thus a central position, not only as their " head " but also as the mediating organ whence proceed the judicial and saving operations and the self-revelation of the Divine King.

It is no more than this that A. F. Kirkpatrick says when he
nb. expounds the Isaian declaration as follows: [70]

> The fourfold name of this prince declares his marvellous nature and proclaims him to be, in an extraordinary and mysterious way, the representative of Jehovah. The title, *Wonderful Counsellor* conveys the idea of his endowment with supernatural wisdom in that counsel which was peculiarly the function of a king. *Mighty God* expresses his divine greatness and power, as the unique representative of Jehovah, who is Himself the *Mighty God* (x. 21). *Eternal Father* describes his paternal tenderness and unending care for his people.

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[68] " Messianic Prophecy," ^{2} 1884, E. T. 1891, p. 280; cf. p. 182.

[69] This means, of course that Riehm does not regard Is. vii. 14, Mic. v. 1 as involving this for the Messiah.

[70] " The Doctrine of the Prophets," ^{2} 1897, p. 193.

> *Prince of Peace* denotes the character and end of his government. His advent is still future but it is assured. *The zeal of Jehovah of hosts will perform this.*

To the exposition of the term "the Mighty God" Kirkpatrick attaches a footnote, which without comment adduces the following words from C. Orelli: "In such passages the Old Testament revelation falls into a self-contradiction, from which only a miracle has been able to deliver us, the Incarnation of the Son of God." Thus, and thus only, does he intimate that he is aware that the treatment of the epithet "Mighty God" as a suitable one for a merely human representative of Jehovah, however unique, does violence to all linguistic propriety.

Orelli, from whom the quotation is taken, it is needless to say, did not write the words taken over from him on any such hypothesis. In his opinion the prophet has in view a truly superhuman figure and one gets the impression, as he reads Orelli's exposition of the passage, that, so far as he fails to give its full meaning, the failure is due to a defect in his Christological thought, rather than to unwillingness to take the prophet at the height of his meaning. He writes:[71]

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> When in the first name a miraculous, divine character is ascribed to the ruler in his capacity of counsellor, planning for his people's good, this is saying more than that his wisdom far exceeds that usual among rulers; it is affirmed that his wisdom is related to the human as divine. Just so, the second predicate attributes to him energy in action. He is called *strong God,* not merely a divine hero: *a God of a hero,* for גִּבּוֹר is an adjective, and the phrase cannot be understood differently than in x. 21, where it is used of the Lord Himself. In this second name, also, doubtless, a definite expression of his dignity, one side of his working, is taken into view, namely, his divine energy in action, as in the first the superhuman grandeur of his counsel; but his person itself is thereby raised to divine greatness. He is called *strong God* in a way that would be inapplicable to a man, unless the one God who rightly bears the name *strong God* were perfectly set forth in this His Anointed One. In such passages, the Old Testament revelation falls into a self-contradiction, from which only

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[71] "Old Testament Prophecy," E. T. 1885, p. 274 f.

a miracle has been able to deliver us, the Incarnation of the Son of God. Elsewhere it draws the sharpest limit between the holy God and the sinful child of man, and its superiority to heathen religions depends in great part on this limit. Prophecy gradually lets this limit drop, in proof that the aim of God's action is to transcend it and to unite Himself most closely with humanity. In such oracles we Christians find no deification of the human, such as is the order of the day on heathen soil. Otherwise prophecy would be a retrogression from the teaching of the law into naturalism and heathen idealism. But in such oracles we find a clear proof that even in the time of the old covenant the Spirit of God was consciously striving after the goal that we see reached in the new.

"Divine wisdom," he continues after a page or two,[72] "divine strength, paternal love faithful as God's, divine righteousness and peace are ascribed to him, in such a way, indeed, that his person also appears divine: he perfectly exhibits God to the world; consequently his dominion is really God's dominion on earth. Every Judaizing and rationalizing attempt to adapt the insignia conferred on the Messiah here to a man of our nature, degrades them, and with them the Spirit who framed them." After this there is nothing left to say except pro. what V. H. Stanton says with the simplicity of truth:[73] "Language is used" in this passage "to which only the person of a truly Divine Messiah could adequately correspond." This appears to be recognized, after his own fashion, even by G. B. pro. Gray, when he comments:[74]

> Some of the names singly and even more in combination, are, as applied to men, unparalleled in the Old Testament, and on this account are regarded by Gressmann (p. 280 ff.) as mythological and traditional; cf. also Rosenmüller, *Scholia*. . . . The Child is to be more than mighty . . . more than a mighty man . . . more than a mighty king; he is to be a mighty אל, God. This attribution of divinity, implying that the Messiah is to be a kind of demi-God, is without clear analogy in the Old Testament, for Ps. xlv. 7 (6) is ambiguous.

The language in which this comment is couched, as well as the direct reference to him, recalls us to the effect on the interpretation of the passage of the new point of view introduced by Gressmann and his fellow-workers in the field of the history of religion.[75] The essence of this new point of view lies in the contention that the religious development and the religious language of Israel are to be explained after the analogy of the religious development and the religious language of the neighboring peoples; and on the assumption of a common body of old-oriental mythical ideas underlying them all alike. How this applies to the Messianic conceptions of Israel Gunkel briefly explains to us. He says: [76]

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[72] P. 277.

[73] "Jewish and Christian Messiah," p. 104.

[74] "Isaiah" (International Critical Commentary), 1912, i. p. 173.

Religiongeschicht
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> The figure of the Messiah, too, belongs to this originally mythological material. It is true that the new David or sprout of David whom the prophets expect, is only a man, though endowed with divine powers, and the hope that such a king should arise and bless Israel is primarily a purely natural one. But there are traits in this figure of a king, nevertheless, which intimate to us that this expected king was originally a God-king. Already in Isaiah he receives names which literally belong to no man: God-hero, Father of Eternity; he is the king of the Golden Age when sheep and wolf lie down together; particularly striking is it that his birth is celebrated repeatedly with mysterious statements, and that the salvation of Israel is hoped for from it: for a fresh-born human child cannot help his people, though no doubt a divine child could. We notice also that other prophets and many psalmists speak of a God who is to be King of the whole world; that is, Jahveh whose enthronement and ascension in the last times the Psalmists particularly sing. The whole material falls most beautifully into order if we assume that the Israelitish hope of a king was preceded by an alien mythical one, according to which a new God ascends as King the throne of the world. And it therefore does not surprise us when we meet in the later Apocalypses with a heavenly figure who is to come from heaven and establish a blessed kingdom on earth. This figure of a divine king is, therefore, no new creation of Apocalyptic Judaism: but it is the same figure which already lies at the foundation of the prophetic hopes."

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[75] Cf. for example Julius Boehmer, "Reichgottesspuren in der Völkerwelt" in Schlatter and Lütgert's "Beiträge zur Fördering christlicher Theologie," 1906, x.–i. p. 87.

[76] "Zum religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis," p. 24 f.

This ingenious construction has been worked out into greater detail by Gressmann and set forth by him in perhaps as attractive a form as it is capable of receiving.[77] The difficulty with it is that it requires too many assumptions, and that these assumptions receive no support from the facts. As we have already seen, the ancient orient knows nothing of an eschatological king.[78] Israel knows as little of a deified King.[79] The whole mythological framework of the edifice thus breaks down. E. Sellin has solidly shown, moreover, that the entire development which it is here sought to explain on the basis of an alien mythology taken over by Israel from its neighbors, is purely native to Israel and has its roots set in the revelation-act at Sinai.[80]

alue of Gressmann
+ Gunkel:
struction of Old
eral School

The promulgation of this new view, however, has focussed attention on the prophetic language to which it seeks to assign a mythological significance, — with the effect of rendering the current attempts to explain that language away absurd. It has become quite clear in the course of the discussion that the prophets do attribute a divine nature and do ascribe divine functions to the Messiah. Indeed, the entire body of "results" of the "Old Liberal" criticism concerning the development of the Messianic hope — which it tended to relegate more and more completely to post-exilic times — has been hopelessly broken up.[81] It has again been made plain that the Messianic hope was aboriginal in Israel, and formed, indeed, in all ages the heart of Israelitish religion. In sequence to this, much of the disintegrating criticism of the documents which had been indulged in for the purpose of giving a semblance of versimilitude to the hypothesis of the late origin of the Messianic development, has become antiquated; the integrity and early date of sections and passages hitherto removed to a late period have been restored; and the unity of the Messianic hope in Israel, throughout all ages, has been vindicated, — so that, from the beginning down through the Apocalypses of the later Judaism and the songs of the earlier chapters of the Gospel of Luke, we see exhibited essentially a single unitary hope. In a passage written with great restraint, Herman Bavinck describes the effect produced by the introduction of the new view, thus.[82]

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[77] "Der Ursprung," pp. 250–301. Arthur Drews, of course, makes the most of it, in his fashion: "Christusmythe,"[1] pp. 8–9.

[78] See above, pp. 10–11.

[79] Gressmann writes, *op. cit.*, p. 285: "The general religious presupposition under which alone a figure like that of the God-King could be formed, is the king-deification, which, to be sure cannot be proved for Israel, but certainly may be for its neighboring nations."

[80] "Der alttestament. Prophetismus," p. 183: "The specifically Israelitish character and the original grounding of its kernel is certain. And its roots are set not in mythology but in the religion of Israel, in Israel's belief in the God of Sinai, to whom in the end the world must belong." So, p. 182: "The real root of the expectation of a Savior lies also here in the revelation act of Sinai. Here and here only could a foundation be laid for viewing the whole history under the point of sight of waiting for the appearance of the world-God, who is to fill the universe with His glory."

[81] Cf. what Sellin says, "Der alttestament. Prophetismus," pp. 167–168.

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> In place of the feverish efforts which were more and more ruling in the dominant school of literary criticism to remove all Messianic prediction to post-exilic times, it is now acknowledged that the pre-exilic prophets, not only themselves cherished such Messianic expectations, but also presuppose them among the people; nor have they themselves excogitated them and proclaimed them as novelties to the people; but they have received them from the past and are building on expectations which have existed from ancient times and have been current in Israel. Accordingly this new tendency among Old Testament scholars, as good as altogether discards the earlier interpolation hypothesis and recognizes a high antiquity for all eschatological ideas concerning the day of the Lord, the destruction of enemies, the deliverance of the people, the appearance of the Messiah, the consummation of the kingdom of God, and the like, and in the figure of the Messiah, as presented in the Old Testament, permits to come again fully to their rights even the supernatural traits, such as the miraculous birth (Is. vii. 14; Mic. v. 1), the divine names (Is. ix. 5) and so forth. Numerous texts and pericopes, which were considered post-exilic by the earlier critics, now again rank as genuine, and the so-called Christology of the Old Testament finds itself thus once more restored more or less fully to its rights and its value.

[82] "Gereformeerde Dogmatiek,"^{3} 1910, p. 249.

Dan 7:14

Perhaps there is no passage which more immediately suggests itself, when we ask after Old Testament testimonies to the transcendence of the Messiah than Daniel's account of his great vision of one like unto a Son of Man coming with the clouds of heaven (vii. 13, 14). So far as appears no doubt was felt as to the Messianic reference of this vision until modern times.[83] Even the Rationalists, as Hengstenberg points out,[84] though with strong temptations to reject it, yet for the most part recognized its Messianic character. And even up to the present day, when it has become the "Liberal" tradition [85] that, by the "one like unto a son of man," not the Messiah but the Israelitish people is intended, not only does the original Messianic interpretation still hold its own, but can be spoken of still by S. R. Driver, for example, as "the current interpretation." [86] Perhaps Hermann Schultz and Eduard Riehm may be taken as fair examples of how those "Liberals" who still cling to the interpretation of the vision of an individual, wish it to be understood. Schultz, who decides for this personal application only as probable, supposes [87] that Daniel conceived of the Messiah as a being dwelling with God in the heavens, like one of the angel-princes of whom he also speaks as like sons of men.[88] Riehm [89] will not allow even so much. He will not agree that there is in the vision any hint that the "one like

Liberal Views

Collective

Individual

A. Schultz

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[83] The solitary exceptions of Ephraem Syrus among the Church Fathers and of Abenezra among the Jews may be left out of account.

[84] "Christology," iii. p. 88. He mentions De Wette, Bertholdt, Gesenius van Lengerke, Maurer.

[85] It is this that Sellin means when he says that the figure is "according to the dominant exposition simply a representation of the people of God" ("Der israelitisch-jüdische Heilandserwartung," p. 70).

[86] "The Book of Daniel" ("The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges") 1900, p. 102; cf. list of supporters of the two views on p. 108, note 4.

[87] "Alttestamentliche Theologie," ^{5} 1896, pp. 635 f.

[88] This is probably the ruling view among those "Liberals" who allow the personal interpretation. For example, A. Schweitzer, writes (*The Expositor*, Nov. 1913, p. 444): "In the Book of Daniel the view is taken that there is no longer a ruling Davidic family from which a ruler could be raised up to be Messiah. The author, therefore, expects that God will confer the supreme power in the coming world-age on an angelic Being who possesses human form and has the appearance of a 'son of man' (Dan. vii. 13–14)."

[89] "Messianic Prophecy," p. 196.

unto a son of man" is of Divine or of angelic, or even in any sense of heavenly (as in Beyschlag's "heavenly man") nature. The prophet, he insists, gives no intimation of the origin of this Being, beyond the constant presupposition that he belongs with "the saints of the Most High." He is represented as being in heaven and coming thence "*only because* he is the representative and organ of the God of heaven," and a "superhuman character and a divine position and dignity" are thus "lent, as it were, to Him." That is to say we can learn from this passage only that this Being comes from God, in the sense that he is sent by God to do God's work in the world.

B. Riehm

The element of truth in this reasoning lies in its refusal to separate the "one like unto a son of man" completely from humanity, as if he were presented as a purely heavenly Being, and thus dissevered wholly from the entire course of Messianic expectation heretofore, in which the Messiah uniformly appears in close connection with Israel from whom He springs. It is the more important to point out the inconsequence of the total transcendentalizing of the Messiah on the basis of this vision, that the novelty of the vision in the history of the Messianic expectation lies precisely in its throwing up the transcendental element of the Messianic figure into such a strong light as apparently to neglect, if not quite to obscure, its human side. "Now," writes Sellin,[90] "the expectation here presented to us is new in so far as this Future Ruler appears in Daniel absolutely as a heavenly Being, borne on clouds, standing before the heavenly throne of God; that there is complete silence as to His human derivation; that He, although He also has human traits, is a heavenly Being; that, on the other hand, all actual earthly traits such as are always attributed by the prophets to the Savior, because He is born into this world, are stripped off. In this expectation of Daniel's all and every earthly human being is transcended; the Savior comes no longer from this world, no matter how miraculously given by God, but wholly and exclusively from the transcendental world." This side of the matter may be capable thus of exag-

Truth in Liberal Vie

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[90] "Der israelitisch-jüdische Heilandserwartung," p. 72 f.

geration, but it is clearly hopeless to represent a figure in any measure so presented to us, as wholly human, as Riehm would fain do. If it must be held that room is left for human traits not here insisted upon, the traits which are insisted upon are obviously distinctly superhuman, or, we should rather say, distinctly divine. This is already apparent from his representation as coming with (or on) the clouds. It is always the Lord, as Hengstenberg already pointed out,[91] who appears with, or on, the clouds of heaven; none but the Lord of nature can ride on the clouds of heaven; and the clouds, as Michaelis says, "are characteristic of divine majesty." Julius Grill is quite right when he throws into emphasis[92] that "majesty" is the one characteristic which is insisted upon in the "one like unto a son of man." He is not represented as coming from heaven to earth (Holsten, Appel), or as going from earth to heaven, or as coming out of obscurity into manifestation (H. Holtzmann). What he is represented as doing is simply drawing nigh to the throne. "What is emphasized in Daniel vii. 13 is the immediate vicinity of God into which the 'one like unto a son of man' is brought," says Grill, and compares Ps. cx. 1, and Jer. xxx. 21. "It is," he says again,[93] "a veritable coronation act which the author has seen and wishes to describe."

Neo-Liberal
individual)
[illegible]

The investigation of the passage by Grill has apparently become the starting-point for a new movement of "Liberal" authors towards recognizing its reference to an individual figure. This does not appear to be due to any peculiar strength or special novelty in Grill's manner of prosecuting the discussion; the reasons which he presents for understanding the passage thus, are very much the same that have been repeatedly urged before. But he approaches the question from a new angle and his readers have been prepared to follow his suggestion by their participation in his general presuppositions.

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[91] "Christology," iii. 83: so also Pusey, "Daniel the Prophet,"^{2} 1868, p. 85 f. Cf. Driver, *in loc.*: "*with the clouds of heaven:* in superhuman majesty and state."

[92] "Untersuchungen über die Entstehung des vierten Evangeliums," i. 1902, p. 52.

[93] P. 54.

Grill himself thinks of a purely heavenly being as presented to us here, an angel, perhaps Michael, perhaps a higher Being still, "a most exalted personal intermediary between God and the world; and," he somewhat unexpectedly adds, "a transcendent prototype of the God-pleasing humanity ultimately to be realized in the people of the Most High." Nathaniel Schmidt had already[94] expressed a similar view, interpreting the man-like Being as an angel and more particularly as Michael, the guardian angel of Israel; and his view had attracted to itself Frank C. Porter.[95] In a later article[96] Schmidt restates his view, citing Grill in support of it in general, but declining to accept the somewhat incongruous addition by which Grill attempts to combine the two main interpretations of the passage — that the man-like Being is an exalted heavenly personage and that he is the type of the saints of God. "Whether Michael or any other angel was ever thought of as the ideal Israelite," he declares to be doubtful. T. K. Cheyne[97] follows in Schmidt's steps, and, as was his wont, seeks to improve on him. Schmidt strongly repels the idea that Daniel's figure is the Messiah; to him this figure is distinctively a heavenly being, — angelic or more probably super-angelic, Michael or one higher still than Michael. To Cheyne,[98] he is both the Messiah, and "an angel, presumably Michael, the great prince-angel who defends the interests of the people of Israel," — or rather Michael, the somewhat obscured representative of Marduk who was no angel but a God; in a word "a degraded (but an honorably degraded) deity," a "great superhuman (and originally divine) personage," "the heavenly Messiah" who, having played a great rôle in the creation of the world and the deliverance from Egypt (as the Angel of Jehovah) is in the last days to "redeem the world and mankind." In sharp contrast with Cheyne, Paul Volz,[99] while following

1. Grill
2. Schmidt
3. Porter
4. Cheyne
5. Volz

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[94] *Journal of Biblical Literature,* xix, 1900.

[95] "Hastings' *B.D.,*" iv. p. 260.

[96] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," iv. 1903, p. 4710 f.

[97] "Bible Problems," 1904, pp. 213 ff.

[98] Pp. 73, 214, ff.

[99] "Jüdische Eschatologie," 1903, pp. 101 f., 214 ff.

Grill in rejecting the symbolical interpretation and seeing in the one " like unto a son of man " an individual being, is clear that Michael is not meant, nor any angelic being, but a simple man, the Lord-Messiah, the Lord of the new world, to whom is to be given the dominion of the world, and all the peoples and all the times. " He is certainly not the symbolical representative of the Kingdom of God, but the prince of his Kingdom. He is the representative (*Stellvertreter*) of God, to whom the power and honor and dominion belong; he stands, however, also in direct relation to the people of the seer, to the people Israel, his dominion is their dominion " — in short, he is the Messiah. Though he thus belongs to the category of man, he is not, however, forthwith to be assigned to the earthly sphere. He comes from heaven. The old myth of a primitive man comes into view here: a primitive man created as the opponent of the primitive beasts, the demonic monsters, who is to deliver the cosmos from them and secure the heavenly beings from their assaults. " This primitive Savior was brought forward, now, by the Apocalyptists for their eschatological purposes: Daniel recalls that man of whom the myth speaks and sees him in the vision; the Savior of the primitive age becomes the Savior of the last age, and the one as the other has to do with the beasts; the Apocalypse of Daniel, nevertheless, pays no further attention to the primitive existence of this man." According to Volz, then, Daniel's " one like unto a son of man " is, indeed, a transcendent being, but yet only a man, though a heavenly man: conceived on the lines of the primitive man and so far a reproduction of him; but not precisely that primitive man and therefore not necessarily preëxistent.

All this, now, Gressmann turns right as its head.[100] All investigators are agreed, says he with fine neglect of his colleagues, that in the text as it lies before us, the Man stands as a symbol of Israel, as the beasts do of the heathen kingdoms. But this is only a use to which Daniel has put a borrowed figure: " the originality of the reworker consists only in this — that he has reinterpreted the Man of Israel." Whatever else

Gressmann (collective) [illegible]

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[100] " Der Ursprung," usw. p. 340.

there is in the passage, we may safely employ for the reconstruction of the old myth, and adventuring on this path we find in the Man a parallel figure to the Messiah, who, according to the old Israelitish conception, was to stand at the beginning of the new age and all the peoples be subject to Him. He is, no doubt, an angel, but no common angel, the highest angel rather, the Being who is the greatest of all, next after only the Ancient of Days; hence He is not Gabriel or Michael — they are not high enough. We cannot give Him a name; we must be modest and say merely that this angel means that eschatological figure, whom everybody knows as the eschatological man which in the end of the days is to be made the Lord of the world. In the heathen form of this myth, which lies behind the Jewish one, He was, of course, a God; and this God has only been degraded into an angel in consequence of Jewish monotheism. It was as an angel therefore that He came to Daniel; and Daniel turned Him into a symbol of Israel. The development thus proceeded in directly the opposite direction from what is commonly thought. Israel is not here represented as one like unto a son of man; but the man is represented as Israel.

Sellin[101] makes it his primary task to draw the teeth of Gressmann's mythology. He takes his start frankly from Gressmann's findings. It is true enough, he says, that the Messianic conception is wider than that of the Son of David; wider and older. We may see proofs of this all through the prophets. Witness what we are told in them of the birth of Immanuel from the Almah who was with child, of the travail of the Yoledhah, of the seven shepherds and eight princes of the fifth chapter of Micah, of the "Mighty God" and other great names of the ninth chapter of Isaiah, above all of the eating of milk

Truth in Gressmann

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[101] In Sellin's view, Dan. vii. 13, in the original Biography of Daniel, "referred to the proclamation of the Saviour as the Second Adam, as a heavenly man, free from all that is earthly, and to His kingdom"; but the later author of the Apocalypse of Daniel — that is, our Daniel — has transferred this to the whole people of God. So he explains in "Prophetismus," p. 97, note 1. In the discussion in "Heilandserwartung," pp. 70 ff., he deals with Daniel's presentation of "one like unto a son of man" as an individual figure without raising question of the composition of the passage.

and honey, the picture of the King of Paradise riding on the ass, and the like.[102] But why represent these things as borrowed goods? Why, above all, think of Daniel's Man, who certainly was not invented by Daniel, but was already known to his readers, as a recent importation from heathendom? Rather, Daniel throws himself back on the prophets before him where we may find these things fragmentarily alluded to; as, for example, in Isaiah, and everywhere in the Old Israelitish expectations of a Being coming out of the Divine sphere. What we have in Daniel is not something new to Israel, but the primaeval Jewish expectation of a Savior newborn, stripped of this-world traits, and transformed into the sphere of the transcendental world.[103]

So, the discussion goes on. But it does not remain without results. And the main result of it is, that assurance is rendered doubly sure that in the "one like unto a son of man" of Dan. vii. 13, we have a superhuman figure, a figure to whose superhuman character justice is not done until it is recognized as expressly divine. It was understood to be a superhuman figure by everyone who appealed to it and built his Messianic hopes upon its basis throughout the whole subsequent development of the Jewish Church.[104] Wherever, in the Apocalyptic literature we meet with the figure of the Son of Man, it is transcendentally conceived.[105] When our Lord Himself derived from it His favorite self-designation of Son of Man,[106] He too took it

Christ's Usage

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[102] "Die alttestamentliche Religion im Rahmen der andern altorientalischen," 1908, p. 45.

[103] "Der israelitisch-jüdische Heilandserwartung," pp. 70 ff.

[104] Cf. A. Dillmann, "Handb. der alttest. Theologie," p. 538: "Finally the whole exegetical tradition from the Book of Enoch (which is directly dependent on Daniel) on, has even understood by this title the king of the kingdom. I cannot help holding that this interpretation is right. In this case we have not only the beginning of the development of the earthly kingdom of God into a *βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν* here, but also its head is designated as like an angelic being (for these are elsewhere in Daniel also designated כְּבַר אֱנָשׁ), a preëxistent Being present already in heaven who in the fulness of the times will come and establish the eternal kingdom of heaven."

[105] Cf. W. Bousset, "Religion des Jüdentums,"^{1} p. 24 ff. (In ed. 2, pp. 301 f. the more relevant part of this statement is eliminated).

[106] Cf. H. J. Holtzmann, "Lehrbuch der Neutestament. Theologie,"^{1} i.

over in a transcendental sense; and meant by applying it to Himself to present Himself as a heavenly Being who had come forth from heaven and descended to earth on a mission of mercy to lost men. On every occasion on which our Lord called Himself the Son of Man thus, He bears His witness to the transcendental character of the figure presented to Daniel. There is no reason apparent today why His judgment of the seer's meaning should be revised. If by his "one like to a son of man" Daniel meant to bring before us the figure of an individual being, and that seems to us to be beyond question, — it is very certain that the individual the figure of whom he brings before us is superhuman, or rather Divine.

In attempting to illustrate the testimony of the Old Testament to the deity of the Messiah we have laid particular stress on the great declarations in Ps. xlv. 6, Is. ix. 6 and Dan. vii. 13. These are, as we have said, high lights shining out brightly on the surface of a pervasive implication. They are not the only points which shine out on its surface with special brilliancy. We might just as well have chosen to dwell, instead, on Ps. ii. or Ps. cx. or Mic. v. 2, or Jer. xxiii. 6 or Zech. xiii. 7 or Mal. iii. 1, and the like.[107] A selection, however, had to be made and we have endeavored to select those particular points on which the light seemed to shine with the purest illumination. We should be sorry to leave the impression, however, that the testimony of the Old Testament to the Deity of the Messiah is dependent upon these particular passages, and their fellows. The salient fact regarding it is that it is an essential element in the eschatological system of the Old Testament and is in-

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p. 247: "The reference of the term back to Dan. vii. 13 (already essayed by expositors of the Reformation period like Chemnitz and recommended by Ewald and Hitzig) is to-day the, at all events, most recognized and most assured result of the discussions of the 'Son of Man,' vexed in so many points."

[107] F. E. König, "Offenbarungsbegriff," ii. p. 398, illustrating how the light of salvation breaks now and again through the veil of Old Testament conceptions, by which it is covered in the Old Testament announcements, observes (among other things) that "the superhumanness of the mediator grows ever clearer (Is. ix. 6 ff., xi. 1 ff.; Mat. v. 1)." Cf. Ottley, Hastings' *B.D.*, ii. p. 459 f.

separably imbedded in the hope of the coming of God to His kingdom which formed the heart of Israelitish religion from its origin. We have only to free ourselves from the notion that the Messianic hope was the product of the monarchy and to realize that, however closely it becomes attached to the Davidic dynasty in one of its modes of expression, it was an aboriginal element in the religion of Israel, to understand how little it can be summed up in the expectation of the coming of an earthly king. It is one of the chief merits of the new school of research that it is making this ever more and more clear.

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Meanwhile, it is an unhappy fact that we may search in vain through many of the current treatises on the Messianic hope for intimations that it included the promise of a Divine Redeemer. It is much, indeed, if we find a hearty recognition that a Messianic figure occupied an essential place in it; at least during the larger space of the history of Israelitish religion. Even devout-minded students have been sometimes tempted to represent Messianic prophecy as fulfilled "not so much in the personality and work of Christ as in the religion of Christ."[108] When the person of the Messiah is given its rights, however, as the center of Messianic prophecy, it is still often insisted that He was conceived purely as a human being,—as Trypho, Justin Martyr's collocutor in the famous dialogue, contended in the second century. At the best, we get such a concession as A. Dillmann's. "We have then," says he,[109] "in this whole series of Messianic prophesies certainly the portrait of a sovereign of the kingdom, endowed with Divine attributes and powers, but nowhere a God or God-man; on the other hand, however, the Book of Daniel advances to a still higher, metaphysical or mystical view of His nature . . . an already existing being preëxisting in the heavens, who in the fulness of the times comes and establishes the kingdom of the saints."[110] On this A. B. Davidson makes less than no advance, when he declares [111] — shall we not say, evidently not without some misgivings? — " In Is. ix. xi. it is not taught that Messiah is God, but that Jehovah is fully present in Him. The general eschatological idea was that the presence of Jehovah in person among men would be their salvation. The prophet gives a particular turn to this general idea, representing that Jehovah shall be present in the Davidic king. The two are not identified but Jehovah is fully manifested in the Messiah." The sufficient answer to such comments is that they are obviously minifying in intention; they are endeavors not to concede too much where concession is seen to be nevertheless necessary. We do not wonder that Davidson feels constrained to add: " The passage goes very far." Pity it is that he could not see his way to go the whole length that it goes.

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[108] Cf. F. H. Woods, "The Hope of Israel," 1896, p. 184.

[109] "Handbuch der Alttestament. Theologie," pp. 538–539.

[110] The schematization of the Messianic hope worked out from this point of view is very clearly presented by C. F. Kent, "The Sermons, etc., of Israel's Prophets," 1910, pp. 45–47.

Happily, however, there have always been some who, standing less under the blight of the current critical theories, have been able to see more clearly. Thus, for example, F. Godet has seen his way to declare [112] that " the idea of the Divinity of the Messiah " is " the soul of the entire Old Testament "; and, after adducing Isaiah's designation of Him as " Wonderful," " Mighty God," and Micah's discrimination of His historical birth at Bethlehem from His prehistoric birth " from everlasting," and Malachi's calling Him " Adonai coming to His temple," to sum up in these sentences: " There was in the whole of the Old Testament from the patriarchal theophanies down to the latest prophetic visions, a constant current towards the incarnation as the goal of all these revelations. The appearance of the Messiah presents itself more and more clearly to the view of the prophets as the perfect theophany, the final coming of Jehovah." It is upon this thread of Old Testament teaching, he goes on to remark — broken off in the Rabbinical development — that Jesus laid hold in His assertion of the dignity of His person as Messiah. These words might well have been written today; they express admirably the new insight which we have obtained unto the nature and development of Old Testament eschatology.

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[111] Hastings' *B.D.*, iv. p. 124 f.; similarly, " Old Testament Prophecy," 1903, pp. 367–368.

[112] " Commentary on Luke," E. T. ii. p. 251.

II

MISCONCEPTION OF JESUS, AND BLASPHEMY OF THE SON OF MAN

MISCONCEPTION OF JESUS, AND BLASPHEMY OF THE SON OF MAN[1]

IT IS, perhaps, not always appreciated how great a popular excitement was roused when, as Mark puts it, "after that John was delivered up, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the Gospel of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand" (Mk. i. 14, 15). It is not the fault of the Evangelists if it is not fully understood. Mark, for example, adverts no less than eight times before he reaches the middle of his third chapter to the enthusiasm which attended Jesus wherever He appeared. We shall perceive how nearly this constitutes the main subject of these opening chapters of his Gospel, if we will but read consecutively the passages in which it is spoken of. "And the report of Him went out straightway everywhere into all the region of Galilee round about" (i. 28). "And at even when the sun did set they brought unto Him all that were sick, and them that were possessed with devils. And all the city were gathered together at the door" (i. 32, 33). "And they found Him and say unto Him, All are seeking Thee" (i. 37). "Insomuch that Jesus could no more openly enter into a city, and was without in desert places; and they came to Him from every quarter" (i. 45). "And when He entered again into Capernaum after some days it was noised that He was in the house. And many were gathered together so that there was no longer room for them, no, not even about the door . . . and when they could not come nigh Him for the crowd, they uncovered the roof where He was" (ii. 1, 2, 4). "And He went forth again by the seaside, and all the multitude resorted unto Him" (ii. 13). "And Jesus with His disciples withdrew to the sea; and a great multitude from Galilee followed: and from Judea, and from Jerusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond Jordan, a great multitude hearing what great things He did, came unto Him. And He spoke to His disciples that a little boat should wait on Him because of the crowd, lest they should throng Him" (iii. 7–9). "And He cometh into a house, and the multitude cometh together again, so that they could not so much as eat bread" (iii. 20).[2] We may almost fancy that we can observe the crowds which thronged Jesus ever increasing in number and persistency under our eyes: they gather at the door (i. 32–34); there is no longer room even at the door (ii. 2); they are so continually with Him that He has no opportunity even to eat (iii. 20). But we note that, already at i. 45 (cf. i. 37), they had not only made the city inaccessible to Him, but had populated the very desert to which He withdrew; and at iii. 9 (cf. iv. 1) they so thronged Him even on the open sea-shore as to compel Him to take refuge in a boat and speak to them thence. The agency by which this great public agitation was created was not merely the proclamation that the Kingdom of God was at hand, but the manifestation of its actual presence in the abounding miracles of healing which were performed (Mat. xii. 28, Lk. xi. 20).[3] Disease and death must have been almost eliminated for a brief season from Capernaum and the region which lay immediately around Capernaum as a center. No wonder the public mind was thrown into a state of profound perturbation, and, the enthusiasm spreading, men flocked from every quarter to see this great thing, questioning with one another what it all meant.

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[1] From *The Princeton Theological Review,* xii. 1914, pp. 367–410.

Meanwhile, there were necessarily many who were not drawn into the movement but remained rather, whether momentarily or permanently, merely spectators of it. Of these there were in particular two classes who nevertheless could not look with indifference upon the wave of popular excitement sweeping through the land as it rose to its crest. These were those who felt responsible for Jesus Himself on the one hand, and on the other those who felt responsible for the religion of the community, — for we must bear in mind that the movement was from first to last a distinctly and intensely religious one. The circle of Jesus' relations (perhaps we may take the word for the moment in a rather broader sense than that of its current usage) and the body of the constituted religious guides of the people must each have been compelled to form at once a preliminary judgment upon the movement, and to act upon it. Nor was it likely that in either case this judgment would be favorable. Inevitably, in each case alike, it would be the expression of anxiety not to say of irritation. It is this natural judgment of what we may call the two interested classes that Mark records for us when, as he tells of the concourse of the crowd again to Jesus on His return to Capernaum after His second circuit in Galilee (Mk. iii. 20), he adds: " And when His relations heard it, they came forth to take charge of Him, for they said, He is out of His mind. And the scribes who came down from Jerusalem said, He hath Beelzebul, and it is by the prince of the demons that He casteth out the demons" (Mk. iii. 21, 22). The two judgments are as opposed as are the springs of emotion out of which they rise. It is pity that we hear the echoes of in the one; anger in the other. Jesus' relations, who, it must be observed, had a mere hearsay knowledge of the movement which was sweeping over Galilee in His train — He had not yet been to Nazareth (Mk. vi. 1),[4] — judged from the reports of His conduct which had reached them that He was not altogether Himself, and were prepared to take the responsibility of restraining Him. The scribes, who had heard His words and witnessed His works, could not deny that a supernatural power was operative among them; but, being unwilling to accredit this to a divine, ascribed it rather to a demoniac source, and thus sought to break the influence of Jesus with the people. The two have in common only that they pass an unfavorable judgment upon the movement as a whole.

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[2] So, consecutively, iv. 1, v. 21, 24, 27, 31, vi. 34, vii. 24, 33, viii. 1, ix. 14, 25, x. 1, 46.

[3] Cf. E. von Dobschütz, *The Expositor*, VII. ix. (1910), p. 334: "This 'is come' (ἔφθασε) must mean something more than the usual 'is at hand' (ἤγγικεν); it is the solemn declaration that the Kingdom is present in Jesus' acting; His casting out of devils proves that the powers of the Kingdom are at work." Cf. also H. J. Holtzmann, "Synoptiker," ^{3} p. 243.

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[4] Lk. iv. 16 ff. seems to be a different visit (implied also in Mt. iv. 12, 13) which took place before His Galilean ministry had fairly begun (cf. Meyer, on Mt. xiii. 53).

The naturalness of this unfavorable judgment in each case,[5] in the circumstances in which it was formed, has not prevented its being appealed to, in each instance, in disproof of the supernaturalness of Jesus' person and ministry. It is urged that, if Jesus was really a divine person and His ministry was accompanied by obviously supernatural effects, such as are narrated in the Gospels, it would be inconceivable that those who stood nearest to Him and knew Him best, should have pronounced Him out of His mind. And it is urged again that, in His defence of Himself from the charge of the scribes that He was possessed of a demon and wrought His wonders by the power of the evil one, Jesus so far from asserting that He was a divine person actually contrasts Himself with the divine Spirit as one to speak against whom were a venial sin while to speak against the Spirit is unpardonable blasphemy,—obviously because the Spirit is divine. That we may form a right estimate of these representations, we should look a little closely at the relevant passages.

I

It is Mark alone who tells us of the judgment passed upon Jesus by His relations. The words in which he does it are these: "And He cometh home, and the crowd cometh together again, so that they were not able even to eat bread. And when His relations heard it they came forth to take charge of Him; for they said, He is out of His mind."

The opening words, which we have rendered: "And He cometh home," are translated by many rather: "And He cometh into a house." [6] This statement is then explained as the fundamental statement of the passage, preparing the way, and setting the scene, for the whole remainder of the chapter. Thus a certain emphasis is made to fall on Jesus' actual entrance into a house. We certainly should not in this case, however, expect the ambiguous simple ἔρχομαι to be used,— the εἰς following which might indeed be ordinarily best rendered " to " (compare "unto," Mt. ii. 11, viii. 14, ix. 23, 28, Mk. 1. 29, etc.). His actual entrance into the house may thus even be left in some doubt (compare Mk. v. 38, 39: " and they come to the house . . . and entering it . . ."). The more precise εἰσέρχομαι we may feel sure would have been employed had this been the meaning which was intended to be conveyed, especially if the emphasis which is assumed in the interpretation in question falls upon it (compare Mt. x. 12, xii. 4, 29, Mk. ii. 26, iii. 27, vi. 10, vii. 17, 24, ix. 28, Lk. ix. 4). Moreover it is not easy to find an adequate reason in the immediate context for so formal a statement that Jesus did so simple a thing as to " come into a house." We may say[7] that Jesus went into a house obviously to seek rest and to take food (verse 20): but his need of these things seems to supply no sufficient reason for so formal a record of so slender a circumstance as His going into a house. It is customary, therefore, to go further afield and to seek the real reason of the record in the preparation it gives for the subsequent narrative, the eye being particularly fixed on the statement of verse 31, that His mother and brothers " stood without."[8] Thus, however, an extraordinary method of composition is ascribed to the evangelist. We are to suppose that, having begun an account of Jesus' relations to His family with

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[5] Cf. A. Schweitzer, *The Expositor,* November 1913, p. 449, who remarks of them: "This only means, however, that the former [the scribes] wished at all costs to discredit Him with the people, and that His relatives noticed a change in Him and could not understand how He could come forward as a teacher and prophet."

[6] James Moffat, who in 1901 ("The Historical New Testament" p. 280), had correctly rendered: "Then He comes home," has substituted for this in

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1913 (" The New Testament: A New Translation "): " They went indoors." This would exactly render the words in a different context: and the implication of " home " is in it. But it misses the point here.

[7] With B. Weiss (1878).

[8] B. Weiss *in loc.:* " He goes into a house, because it was in a house that the incident took place which the narrative has in mind (cf. verse 31) " (Meyer on Mark, ed. 6, 1878); " Emphasized in contrast to His sojourn at the sea-side or on the mountain-top (verses 7, 13), because the scene, iii. 31 ff. takes place in a house and Mark wishes to prepare for this," (Meyer on Mark, ed. 8, 1892; ed. 9, 1901); " Prepares for the narrative of iii. 31 ff., which what immediately follows, therefore, only introduces," (" Die vier Evangelien," 1900, p. 186).

iii. 20, 21, Mark suddenly breaks off and thrusts in a long account of His relations with the scribes, only to return without warning again to His family at iii. 31, leaving all the sutures unclosed. We are to treat the whole narrative enclosed in verses 22–30, in other words, as a parenthesis, and to expound verses 20, 21 immediately in connection with verses 31 ff., as if the intermediate section were not there — although it grows naturally out of, and forms a natural whole with, verses 20, 21.[9]

Such results as these would seem to be a sufficient indication that a false start has been taken when we render the opening clause: "And He cometh into a house." In point of fact the phrase may in itself just as well mean: "And He cometh home" (compare viii. 3, 26 with defining pronouns and ii. 1, v. r. pregnantly with verb of rest: vii. 17, ix. 28 where εἰς οἶκον is connected with εἰσέρχομαι, are different — render "indoors"); and this sense is strongly recommended by the context. Jesus had been at the seaside (verse 7) and on the mountain (verse 13): He now returns "home," that is to say, to Capernaum (compare i. 21, ii. 1). The narrative is composed of circuits out from Capernaum and returns to Capernaum, as the center of Jesus' active work: this is one of the points at which His return to His base of operations is intimated, and, as on the former occasions (i. 32, ii. 3; compare i. 45 where R.V.mg. questions whether *εἰςπόλιν* may not be "*the city*," as indeed A.V. had boldly translated it [10]), the crowd immediately gathers. In this case, the close connection which has been assumed between iii. 20 and iii. 31 falls away; the misleading prominence into which the simple opening statement of verse 20 has been thrown is removed; and that statement resumes its natural place as only one of the numerous intimations in this narrative of Jesus' alternating excursions from Capernaum and returns to it (i. 21–35; ii. 1–13; iii. 1–7; iii. 20; iv. 1).

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[9] The difficulties arising from this construction become flagrantly apparent in the course of A. Loisy's skilful efforts to overcome them ("Les Synoptiques," i. pp. 696 ff.): "To consider only the present order of the texts, it might be said that Mark, having deliberately neglected (not been ignorant of) a fact which did not have in itself any particular prominence, substituted for it, in preparation for an incident which he intended to recount after the discourse of the Saviour [to the scribes], the mention of a judgment passed upon Jesus by His own family, which, though less unfavorable than that of the Pharisees, does not fail to exhibit in a sufficiently startling light, the relations of the new preacher with His own people. The *mise en scène* is the sufficiently natural preamble of the incident concerning the family of Jesus: what is secondary is the connection of the disputation with this incident and the artifice which has permitted Mark to neglect the teaching of the possessed man which in the common source of the Synoptics served as the introduction to the disputation. . . . What is said of the family does not attach itself without some embarassment to the context: but this is a piece of unskilfulness which belongs to the redaction, arising possibly from the fact that the preamble, though conceived with a view to the anecdote, does not belong to the traditional basis of the narrative."

The chief interest of this determination lies in its bearing on the interpretation of the phrase in verse 21 which we have translated "His relations." If verses 20, 21 were not written specifically in preparation for verses 31ff.; verses 22–30 are not a parenthesis; and verses 31–35 record a new incident: then the phrase "His relations" in verse 21 does not find its explanation in "His mother and His brothers" of verse 31 — as is very commonly represented — but must be independently interpreted. This phrase,[11] in Greek writers generally, bears ordinarily the meaning of "legates," "representatives," and it still commonly occurs in the papyri in the sense of "agents," "representatives." By the side of this usage, however, there is found another, less common but nevertheless constant, in which it bears the sense, either broadly of "adherents," "followers," or more narrowly of "household," "family," or "kindred." It is obvious that it is in this latter general sense that it is employed in our passage, but it is not easy to fix the exact limits of its connotation. That Jesus' disciples — His adherents, followers — are not intended, is clear, since a contrast is drawn with them (verse 20, αὐτούς). Our English versions — Authorized and Revised, — render the term "friends," not badly if it be taken, as it obviously is intended to be, in a personal, rather than an official sense.[12] The margin of the Authorized Version proposes instead the narrower "kinsmen," following in this the Wycliffite "kynnesmen" and the Genevan "kynesfolkes." The modern versions continue the same line: George R. Noyes, "relations"; James Moffat, 1901, "relatives"; *Twentieth Century New Testament*, "relations"; Samuel Lloyd, "kinsmen"; James Moffat, 1913, "family."[13] It can scarcely be doubted that this is practically what is meant, though too restricted a sense should not be insisted upon.[14] Obviously those are intended who bore such a relation to Jesus that they felt themselves responsible for Him, and that they would naturally be looked to by others to take charge of Him in the contingency of His needing to be kept under some restraint. We might think, in the varying circumstances which would render each natural, of His clansmen, of His fellow-townsmen, of His responsible friends, of His blood-kinsmen, of His household, of His family, of His parents, of His brothers.[15] In the absence of closer contextual definition, only the known circumstances of Jesus' case could supply us with confident guidance in fixing upon the precise persons intended. All that is intimated here is that His natural guardians were inclined to judge Him to be out of His mind, and were prepared to take measures to put Him under the restraint required by His sad condition. Who these natural guardians were we can only conjecturally supply from our further knowledge. There are some who feel quite sure that His mother could not be included among them, because they find it difficult or impossible to believe that she should have so cruelly misjudged Him.[16] There are others, on the contrary,[17] who are prepared to assert confidently, if not even violently, that His mother was included among them; sometimes, apparently, for no other reason than that thus the passage may be exploited as inconsistent, say, with the representations of the Infancy-chapters of Matthew and Luke or in general with the doctrine of the supernatural origin of Jesus. Too great confidence on either part seems misplaced. The passage itself gives us no guidance; and general considerations appear indecisive.

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[10] Render "into town."

[11] For discussions of the meaning of the phrase, see especially Fritzsche *in loc.* and F. Field, "Notes on the Translation of the N. T.," p. 25 (he argues for the meaning "household"). For the usage of the phrase in the papyri, see J. H. Moulton, *The Expositor,* VI. vii. p. 118, viii. p. 436; "Prolegomena," etc., pp. 106–107; *The Expository Times,* xx, p. 476. At "Prolegomena," pp. 106–107, he says: "Οἱ παρ’ αὐτοῦ is exceedingly common [in the papyri] to denote 'his agents' or 'representatives.' It has hitherto been less easy to find parallels for Mk. iii. 21, where it must mean 'his family'; see Swete and Field *in loc.* We can now cite GH 36 (ii./B.C.) οἱ παρ’ ἡμῶν πάντες BU 998 (ii./B.C.) and Par. P. 36 (ii./B.C.)."

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[12] F. C. Conybeare, "Myth, Magic and Morals," 1909, p. 72, insists *suo more* that the rendering "friends" is a "falsification of the text" with the intention of "deceiving English readers who cannot read Greek." The rebuke administered to him by J. H. Moulton, *The Expository Times*, xx. p. 476, is richly deserved.

[13] But Weymouth, "The Modern Speech New Testament," retains the A. V., "friends." Weizsäcker renders "die Seinigen"; Th. Zahn, "Forschungen," etc., iv. p. 332, "die Angehörigen," as also P. W. Schmiedel, cf. note 41 below.

[14] Cf. Swete's note.

[15] Theophylact defines: οἱ οἰκεῖοι αὐτοῦ, with οἱ ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς πατρίδος and οἱ ἀδελφοὶ αὐτοῦ as alternatives.

It is important to observe, however, that the judgment informed as to His condition by Jesus' friends or kinsfolk — according to our broader or narrower understanding of the phrase — was founded on hearsay evidence only. "When His relations *heard* . . .," we read. The meaning can hardly be, merely, that as soon as they heard that He had come home, they went forth to lay hands on Him. Nor does it seem likely that the meaning is merely that they went forth to lay hands on Him when they heard that, on His coming home, a multitude had gathered about Him. The article before "multitude" is probably genuine; and, if genuine, should not be neglected. And, in any event, the "again" has its rights. What appears to be meant is that His relations were moved to their action by the reports which reached them of the great excitement that had been raised by His ministry throughout Galilee, a culminating manifestation of which was seen in this renewed gathering of the crowd at His house.[18] The reports which had reached them of the thronging multitudes that attended His whole work in Galilee and of the popular enthusiasm which followed His movements, led them to suppose Him to be laboring under over-excitement and to undertake the duty of putting Him under restraint.

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[16] Th. Zahn, "Forschungen," etc., vi. p. 332: "We are scarcely to think of Mary among them . . . the word, ἐξέστη is not suitable in the mouth of the mother, and the intention to use physical force against the madman is attributable only to the men not to the women."

[17] Conybeare, as above.

[18] Cf. A. B. Bruce, *in loc.*: "not to be restricted to what is mentioned in verse 20; refers to the whole Galilean ministry with its cures, and crowds, and constant strain."

If His friends, however, had not themselves witnessed His work and knew of its effects only from hearsay, it is not likely that they were living in Capernaum which was the center of His activity and the seat of the most constant popular enthusiasm. On the other hand, in His circuits out from Capernaum He had not yet visited Nazareth (Mk. vi. 1, Mt. xiii. 54).[19] If Nazareth was the home of His friends here mentioned, therefore, their dependence on rumor for knowledge of His work and its effects, is in harmony with what we read in Lk. iv. 23 ff.,[20] Mk. vi. 5, Mt. xiii. 58. It is, indeed, frequently supposed that not Jesus alone, but His family also, had removed from Nazareth to Capernaum at the very beginning of His ministry (Jno. ii. 12).[21] This, however, is little likely in itself;[22] and it would compel us to suppose either that their settlement at Capernaum was quickly abandoned ("and they remained there not many days"[23]), or that by Jesus' friends in our present passage, not "His mother and His brethren and His disciples" are intended, but some broader circle of those responsible for Him. If Jesus' "friends" in the responsible sense of our passage were dwelling in Capernaum — especially if these "friends" be understood as precisely His mother and brothers, constituting His " household " — it would be inexplicable that His returning " home " should not have been to their house; and not only would their personal lack of acquaintance with His work or movements (" when they heard ") be inexplicable, but the action ascribed to them (" they went forth ") would be inappropriate. It would seem that we must think of the " friends " in question as living somewhere out of the path of His work hitherto, and away from the " home " to which He returned from the sea-side and mountain-top. The elimination of His disciples — who belonged to the party which returned from Cana — from the " friends " of our present passage is not only required by the situation in our passage itself, but is in harmony with the statement of Jno. ii. 11, that they already believed in Him. For, a certain measure of unbelief is, of course, implied in the judgment passed on Him by His " friends " here. If His brothers are meant, as seems intrinsically probable, this is in harmony with Jno. vii. 5, from which we learn that they remained unbelieving until the end.[24] The phrases of Jno. vii. 3–5 form, indeed, a very pungent commentary on our passage.

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[19] We have already noted (note 4) that Luke iv. 16 ff. seems to record an earlier visit to Nazareth before His systematic Galilean ministry had begun. Besides Meyer's note at Mt. xiii. 53–58 (E. T. p. 372) cf. Godet's notes on Lk. iv. 23 (E. T. i. p. 238), and John ii. 12 (E. T. ii. p. 19). Luke iv. 23 of course offers a difficulty for this view.

[20] Cf. Godet, i. p. 237: "This speech betrays an ironical doubt respecting those marvellous things which were attributed to Him."

[21] So Wieseler, De Wette, Tholuck, Ewald: cf. esp. Th. Zahn, *in loc.* (p. 163 and note 3) and "Forschungen," vi. p. 331.

[22] Cf. Meyer's note on Jno. ii. 12 (E. T. i. p. 149).

[23] Cf. Westcott's note on Jno. ii. 12: "This is perhaps mentioned to show that at present Capernaum was not made the permanent residence of the Lord, as it became afterwards."

The measure of the unbelief — we designedly use the milder term, instead of the stronger, " disbelief " — which is implied in the judgment and action of Jesus' " friends " recorded in our passage is deserving of some consideration. That we may form an estimate of it it would be well to ascertain with some exactness what is really meant by the term, " He is beside Himself." Many insist that there is no real difference between this judgment upon Jesus and that expressed by the scribes in the words, " He hath Beelzebul " (verse 22).[25] Madness, it is urged, was explained as demoniacal possession, and to say that one was mad was all one with saying that he was possessed.[26] On the

[24] Cf. Swete's note: " The family of Jesus was doubtless inspired by a desire for His safety, but their interpretation of His enthusiasm implied want of faith in Him, cf. Jno. vii. 5; the Mother perhaps was overpersuaded by the brethren."

[25] E.g. H. J. Holtzmann (p. 127), who remarks that Theophylact already explains correctly: δαίμονα ἔχει.

[26] Cf. E. Renan, " Vie de Jesus " ^{2} 1863, p. 263, note 4 (E. T. of the twenty-third and final ed. 1913, p. 273, note 3): " This phrase ' Thou hast a demon ' (Mt. xi. 18, Lk. vii. 33, Jno. vii. 20, viii. 48 ff., x. 20 ff.) should be rendered by

face of it, however, this view is untenable. Possession and insanity are not clearly identified in the Evangelical narratives. It is not even intimated that they were constantly associated.[27] In our present passage they even seem to be expressly distinguished. Mark clearly desires to contrast the judgments passed on Jesus by His friends and His enemies, as, though both uncomprehending, yet the pitying and the condemnatory judgment. Even, however, should we identify all mental alienation with possession, the degree of alienation implied in any given instance would still remain undetermined; the effects of the possession would naturally be very varied, and might on occasion involve only the slightest, perhaps the most temporary unbalancing. In any case, therefore, we are thrown back upon what is actually said.

The term employed [28] in the present passage is not a strong

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'Thou art insane,' as it is said in Arabic *medjnoun enté*. This verb, δαιμονᾶν has also in the whole of classical antiquity the sense of 'to be insane.'" In the text, however, it is said: "But here again the difficulties must not be exaggerated. The disorders explained by possessions were often very slight. In our day, in Syria, people are regarded as insane or possessed by a demon (the two notions are the same, *medjnoun*) who have only some little eccentricity (*bizarrerie*)."

[27] The physical accompaniment of possession mentioned in Mt. ix. 32, Lk. xi. 14 is only dumbness, in Mt. xii. 22, blindness and dumbness, in Lk. xiii. 10–17, curvature of the spine; Cf. also Mt. xv. 22, Mk. vii. 26, xvi. 9, Lk. iv. 33, viii. 2 in none of which cases is insanity indicated. Only in a single instance is mania expressly intimated, and that only by its contrasting state (Mk. v. 15, Lk. viii. 35; cf. 2 Cor. v. 13). W. M. Alexander, "Demonic Possession in the New Testament," 1902, upholding the thesis that "all cases designated 'demoniac' belong to the category 'Lunacy or Idiocy'" (p. 147), establishes his diagnosis in only three cases (Mk. i. 21–26 = Lk. iv. 31–37; Mt. viii. 28–34 = Mk. v. 1–17, Lk. viii. 26–37; Mt. xvii. 14–20 = Mk. ix. 14–29, Lk. ix. 37–43); and in two of these only with difficulty and at the cost of the enlargement of the category of "lunacy" by the addition of "and idiocy." He then applies this diagnosis, without express warrant from the text, to all other cases of possession. John x. 20 need not be read as identifying all possession with lunacy, but may only identify this particular case of lunacy with possession as its cause: cf. Jno. vii. 20, viii. 48.

[28] J. H. Heinrich Schmidt in § 174 of his *Synonymik der Griechischen Sprache* deals with the terms which designate a perverted state of mind (he had dealt in § 147 with these which express a mental deficiency, especially ἄφρων and ἄνους). He divides them into three groups: (1) Words which in

one and need not imply a serious state of mental disturbance. The fundamental implication of the word is no more than that the subject is thrown out of his normal state into a condition of strong, perhaps ungovernable, emotion. The emotion in question may be of the most varied kind, but commonly in the New Testament usage of the word (uniformly except for our present passage and II Cor. v. 13) it is that of amazement, perhaps with a suggestion of bewilderment.[29] In the special usage illustrated by our present passage (cf. II Cor. v. 13), in which it expresses that state of mental aberration which we also describe as " not one's self," it need not import more than an overwrought condition in which it might be thought that the prudent conduct of life would be unlikely and could become impossible. In this general sense, it occurs nowhere else in the New Testament except in II Cor. v. 13, where (to say nothing of demoniacal possession) it certainly does not suggest either raving madness or irrational insanity, but describes on the contrary an ecstatic state in which the Apostle saw a ground for much glorying (xii. 1).[30] We need not imagine, then, that

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the first instance designate the violent utterances of a disturbed mind; (2) words which express more the inward disorder by which the soul is carried away by senseless passions; (3) words which rather describe the soul which thinks and feels in a disturbed manner. **'Εξίστημι** (ἔκστασις) is not included in his lists; but this may be in part because he leaves to one side such terms as require the addition of a φρενός or φρενῶν, or some contextual indication, to define the meaning; and confines himself to such as bear in themselves their significance.

[29] Mt. xii. 23; Mk. ii. 12, v. 42, vi. 51; Lk. ii. 47, viii. 56, xxiv. 22; Acts ii. 7–12, viii. 9, 11, 13, ix. 21, x. 45, xii. 16 = " amazed "; Mk. iii. 21, II Cor. v. 13 = " demented." Cf. ἔκστασις: Mk. v. 42, xvi. 8; Lk. v. 26; Acts iii. 10 = " amazement "; Acts x. 10, xi. 5, xxii. 17 = " trance." Cf. Art. " Amazement " in Hastings' *DCG*.

[30] Cf. C. F. G. Heinrici, " Das zweite Sendschreiben des Apostel Paulus an die Korinthier," 1887, pp. 277 f.: " The fundamental sense of ἐξίστημι *to be out of oneself*, as this is brought about through the experience of an overmastering impression, makes the word equally suitable for describing conditions of very high emotions, like amazement, joy, terror; and emotions which lie beyond the limits of sound mental life (ἐν ἑαυτῷ εἶναι . . . ἐντὸς ἑαυτοῦ γίνεσθαι), whether of the nature of insanity or of rapture. In the latter sense σωφρονεῖν is the technical contrast to ἐκστῆναι, and it is accordingly introduced here for the purpose of indicating experiences which had for the Apostle a signif-

Jesus' friends saw in Him a maniac; we need only understand, — what surely would not be unnatural in men who had as yet at least no sense of the nature of His mission — that they were led by the reports which had come to them to believe that He was in a state of exaltation which endangered His health and safety and needed some soothing hand to guard Him from Himself.[31]

That they felt His condition to be serious, may be inferred from the fact that they were prepared " to lay hold upon Him." Yet exaggeration must be shunned here too. The term, no doubt emphasizes in its ground-idea the thought of force, even of violence; but, beginning thus with the notion of taking forcible possession of, it came to be employed also of simply taking possession of, with the idea of force quite out of sight, and ended by meaning merely to obtain, to get (Acts xxvii. 13), and, indeed, merely to cling to (Mt. xxviii. 9, Acts iii. 11), to retain, to hold (Mt. vii. 3, 4, 8, 9, 10). There is no need in our present passage to emphasize the idea of violence, as if His kinsmen wished " to seize " Jesus.[32] Even " to lay hold upon

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icance similar to that of the rapture which is described later. In this connection the expression then suggests that ecstatic conditions which remain, in their content and source, obscure for the estimate of all others, cannot be the subject of boasting before others. . . . The key to the full understanding of the contrast of ἐκστῆναι and σωφρονεῖν is supplied, however, only by the detailed description of the ecstacy in the polemic concluding sections, which has been mentioned. (xii. 1 f.) . . ."

[31] Cf. A. Loisy, " Evang. Synopt," i. p. 698: " They do not say that Jesus had lost His mind, the word which the Evangelist employs not having this precise meaning in the usage of the New Testament, but being used to designate every transport of astonishment, of admiration, of stupor, of enthusiasm; but they believed Him to be in a state of mystical exaltation, which made Him lose the real sense of life and of His own condition." A. B. Bruce, *in loc.*, goes to an extreme when he says: " In the opinion of His friends, He was in a state of excitement bordering on insanity." Perhaps the English word " transport " presents as fair a rendering of the term here as can be found.

[32] H. J. Holtzmann: " Their purpose is *to apprehend Him;* to possess themselves of Him, κρατ. αὐτ., like vi. 17, xii. 12, xiv. 1; they would seek out the morbidly overstrained member of the family who had become strange and incomprehensible to them, and, no doubt for His own advantage, but still forcibly, withdraw Him from public life." Wohlenberg: " In order to seize Jesus (κρατῆσαι), to possess themselves of Him, if not to take Him into custody, yet in some sense forcibly to apprehend Him; cf. xii. 12, xiv. 1, 46."

Him " is too strong a rendering. " To get Him " is nearer to what it intended; and the idea is not so much to put Him in ward as to take Him in charge. Of course the idea of compulsion underlies everything: His relations were acting under the impression that He was in need of kindly control and were prepared to protect Him from Himself. But it is the idea of protection which dominates the statement, rather than that of compulsion.

Such a judgment upon Jesus' activities, and such an attitude towards His person, were inevitable for those of His kindred who, feeling responsible for Him, were yet ill-informed concerning His person and work. There were some of His kindred, no doubt, to whom such a judgment and attitude would have been at this stage impossible. James and John were of His kindred,[33] and there may have been others of those closest to Him who, with them, already, in the full sense of Jno. ii. 11, " believed on Him." But it is not necessary to pronounce this judgment of His work and attitude toward His person incompatible with any measure of faith in Him; or even with a high degree of faith in Him if imperfectly informed whether of what was to be expected of Him or of what He was actually doing. There is no compelling reason for insisting that His mother was of the number of those of whom it is said here that they were led to believe that He was " beside Himself " and in need of some protective care. But neither does there seem to be any compelling reason for assuming that she could not possibly be of their number.[34] Mary too (like John the Baptist, Mt. xi. 2 ff.), may have had searchings of heart before she adjusted herself to the Great Reality; and, in the meantime,

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B. Weiss: " In order to apprehend Him, possess themselves of Him. . . . In spite of the strongly colored expression of Mk. we are by no means to think of a hostile act (Klostermann), but at the most of a kindly compulsion, which they thought to exercise in His own interest to protect Him in the keeping of the family from further crowding."

[33] As Wohlenberg reminds us.

[34] So, e.g. Wohlenberg: " From all that we otherwise know of Mary, His Mother, it must be taken as absolutely excluded that she should come forward in any way antagonistically to Jesus."

as she had exercised control over her son in His infancy (Lk. ii. 51), so in the first days of His ministry she may have fancied that she saw indications that He still required her motherly care. There would be implied in this, not " a total unbelief in His pretentions, but only an imperfect view of them." [35] Where no belief in His pretentions existed such an attitude towards Him as is here intimated, was, as we have said, not only natural but inevitable. His unbelieving brothers, however kindly, must have thought Him in some sense out of His mind, and must have faced the duty of casting around Him some protection.[36]

Natural, however, as the judgment of Jesus and the attitude towards His person which are here recorded, are in the circumstances and to the persons to which they are ascribed, the critics have laid hold upon them as representing a point of view regarding Jesus, or at least regarding Mary, which is inconsistent with the supernaturalistic tradition of Jesus. On this ground they seek to account for the fact that this section appears in Mark's Gospel only. It was omitted by Matthew and Luke, they tell us, because not consonant with their point of view. In what respect Mark's point of view as to the person of Jesus, or his reverence for Jesus, differs from that of Matthew and Luke, it is meanwhile difficult to perceive. The mere presence of this passage in one of the Evangelists is proof enough that it contains nothing contradictory to the reverence for Jesus' person which is common to them all.[37] Nevertheless P. W. Schmiedel gives this passage a place among his nine "pillar-passages" which he pronounces absolutely credible, as preserving traditions of the real Jesus, precisely on the ground that they make assertions about Jesus which could not have been invented by His worshipping followers, and must therefore have thrust themselves upon this or that Evangelist merely by the force of their undeniable authenticity. This is evidenced, he declares, by the fact that they have been omitted by others of the Evangelists as offensive to their reverence for Jesus.[38] On this view, Matthew and Luke are supposed to have had this statement before them and to have omitted it, because it seemed to them derogatory to Jesus' dignity that those nearest to Him should, even at the outset of His ministry, have been led to fear that He might be beside Himself; and Schmiedel labors [39] to show that Matthew's narrative, for example, retains signs of having been consciously adapted from Mark's. It is more usual, however, to suppose that Mark's statement has been omitted by the other Gospels (presumed to be later than Mark and to be in large part based on it) in the interests of growing reverence for Mary as the mother of our Lord, rather than directly of reverence for Jesus.[40] And, indeed, Schmiedel himself when dealing with the passage at large lapses into this point of view.[41] In a passage like this, it is suggested, Mark accordingly preserves an earlier and truer tradition of the attitude of Jesus' kinsfolk to His person and work than can be found in the later Gospels, whether John or Matthew and Luke. It must be borne in mind, however, that, according to John also, the brothers of Jesus did not believe in Him (Jno. vii. 5), and must therefore have held much the view of Him which is placed on the lips of Jesus' kinsmen in our present passage. The attitude of Mary towards Him alone, can come into question; and it is upon it, accordingly, that the contrast between Matthew and Luke, with their " Infancy chapters " in which Mary's supernatural information as to her son is exploited, and Mark, which has nothing of this kind, is insisted upon.

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[35] The words we have quoted are from the excellent comment of J. A. Alexander on Mk. iii. 21, where, however, he is speaking not of Mary but of Jesus' friends in general, to whom is to be attributed also absence or deficiency of faith. " This," says Alexander, was " a very natural and intelligible state of mind at this stage of the history, and on the part of those whose spiritual or religious feelings were less strong and well-defined than their natural affections or humanity." With Mary also in mind, he repeats in his comment on verse 31, that " nothing could be more natural and pardonable than precisely such solicitude, which is perfectly compatible with true faith and affection, but imperfect views both of His person and mission."

[36] Cf. G. Salmon, " The Human Element in the Gospels," 1907, p. 203: " To the Christian reader it is shocking that any one should be able to suppose that our Lord was out of His mind; yet, if we consider the circumstances, we perceive that the idea was one most likely to occur as it often has done since, when followers of His who were afterwards venerated as saints, had judgments passed on them by sensible men of the world. It is in itself perfectly credible that our Lord should have made the impression commonly produced by one who steps completely out of the beaten track."

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[37] Cf. *The Princeton Theological Review,* xi. 2 (April, 1913), pp. 252 ff.

[38] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881; cf. *The Princeton Theological Review,* xi. 2 (April, 1913), pp. 204 ff.

[39] Coll. 1847–1848.

[40] H. J. Holtzmann may serve as a typical instance ("Synoptiker"^{3} p. 68): "Mark in the most significant way stands alone with the notice in verse 21, since Matthew and Luke already are unable to reconcile themselves to this conception of Mary, and therefore the reparation to be spoken of at Lk. ii. 48." Accordingly at p. 323, he follows Pfleiderer in supposing that the "Behold thy father and I have sought thee" of Lk. ii. 48 is a reminiscence of Mk. iii. 32, "Behold thy Mother and thy brothers seek thee," and serves the further purpose of counteracting what is said in Mk. iii. 21 (not in Luke) together with its consequences in iii. 31–35 (Lk. xviii. 19–21) and to soften the shadow thrown by it on Mary.

[41] "Das vierte Evangelium gegenüber den drei ersten," 1906, p. 18:

The whole case hangs on the suppositions that Mary was included among the kinsmen of Jesus mentioned in Mk. iii. 21, and that the judgment upon Jesus there ascribed to His kinsmen would be impossible to the Mary of the opening chapters of Matthew and Luke. We have seen that neither supposition is necessary, or, indeed, in the presence of any good reasons to the contrary, even reasonable. We may accept the statement of Mk. iii. 20, 21 as intrinsically self-evidencing and therefore " absolutely credible " as a genuine historical fact, without any fear of discrediting thereby either the Infancy chapters of Matthew and Luke or the historical tradition of the supernatural Jesus which constitutes the substance of all the Evangelical records. The attempts to account for the absence of this statement from Matthew and Luke as deliberate omission on dogmatic grounds are accordingly altogether ineffective

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" We must observe moreover the rôle which *Jesus' Mother* plays in the miracle at Cana. Although Jesus had never before worked a miracle (Jno. ii. 11) she knows beforehand that He is going to work one and says to the servants, although she is rebuffed by Him, 'Whatever He bids you, do.' How entirely different it is in Mark! Here (iii. 21) Jesus' kinsmen (*Angehörigen*) go out to lay hold of Him because they said, 'He is beside Himself.' Who these kinsmen were we very soon learn (iii. 31–35): His mother and His brothers come to Him and call Him out of the house. And it is only from their purpose to put a stop to His work and to confine Him to His home that His rude answer finds its explanation: 'Who is my mother and my brothers? He who does the will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother.' "

and the endeavor to discover in the narratives of Matthew and Luke hidden signs of acquaintance with [42] and conscious alteration of Mark's text are too flimsy to justify notice. The entire fact is that we are indebted to Mark for a piece of information altogether natural in itself and consonant with the entire body of facts recorded in the other Evangelists, which nevertheless they do not also preserve for us. This might be inexplicable if we were compelled to suppose that each Evangelist has told us all he knew, or all he knew which he thought "fit to print." But it is just what we should expect on the supposition — which is the only tenable one — that each Evangelist, though serving himself, to a very great extent, with common sources of information, has yet set down in his Gospel from the general store, only what commended itself to him as suitable for his purpose and adapted to advance his particular object in writing.

The naturalness and, indeed, inevitableness of the judgment that Jesus was out of His mind on the part of men not ill-disposed towards Him but yet unable to accept His claims for Himself at their face value, is illustrated by the return to this judgment by a type of modern unbelief. A large literature has in recent years grown up around the suggestion that Jesus was more or less of unsound mind. Whether He is explained as a paranoiac lunatic or merely as a visionary ecstatic, it is inevitable that those who cannot see in Him the Divine Being He proclaimed Himself to be, should think His lofty estimate of Himself too lofty and should seek the account of His too lofty estimate of Himself in some — greater or less — mental derangement. We can scarcely look upon a like judgment among His contemporaries as strange when we are so familiar with it to-day; or urge its existence among His contemporaries as evidence of anything more than it witnesses to to-day. In simple fact, Jesus' career was not that of an ordinary man: and the dilemma is inevitable that He was either something more than a normal man or something less. We, like His contemporaries, — and His contemporaries like us — have only the alternatives: either supernatural or subnormal, either Divine or else " out of His mind." [43]

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[42] We do not doubt that the incident recorded in Mark iii. 20–21 was known to the authors of both Matthew and Luke, as was much else which they (as writing freely, each for his own particular end) do not record.

II

It is again Mark alone who records the extreme expression of the hatred of the scribes towards Jesus in their ascription to Him of demoniacal possession.[44] All three of the Synoptics, however, report the charge made by His enemies that it was by the aid of Beelzebul, the prince of the demons, that He cast out demons.[45] The solemn warning against blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which Jesus founded upon this charge, occurs — in one form or another — in all three Gospels, though in this connection only in Matthew and Mark,[46] while in Luke it appears in another context.[47] As it is solely with this warning that we are now concerned, we transcribe it in its three forms. " Verily, I say unto you, All things shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, their sins, and their blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme; but whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit hath never forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin. Because they said, He hath an unclean Spirit " (Mk. iii. 28–30). " And everyone who shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven unto him; but unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven " (Lk. xii. 10). " Therefore I say unto you, every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven unto him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven unto him, neither in this world nor in that which is to come " (Mat. xii. 31, 32).

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[43] Cf. what is said with respect to W. Heitmüller's hesitations and difficulties in *The Princeton Theological Review*, xii. 2 (April, 1914), pp. 315 ff.

[44] Mk. iii. 22–30; cf. Jno. x. 20, vii. 20, viii. 48.

[45] Mt. xii. 22–27; Mk. iii. 22–30; Lk. xi. 14–23; the parallel, Mt. ix. 34 is not genuine.

[46] Mt. xii. 31, 32; Mk. iii. 28–30.

[47] Lk. xii. 10.

Let us begin by looking at Mark's account.

Mark alone, as we have said, records the opprobrious judgment of the scribes upon Jesus and His work, that He was possessed by Beelzebul. This is formally due, probably, to the circumstance that Mark alone introduces his account of this incident in contrast with the judgment passed upon Jesus by His friends: here is the judgment passed upon Him by His enemies. It is intimated, however, that there is a closer connection between this opprobrious judgment of His enemies and Jesus' warning concerning blasphemy against the Spirit than merely that it formed the formal occasion of the discourse of which the warning is a part. Mark expressly tells us that it was precisely because the scribes attributed demoniacal possession to Him that Jesus was led to give His solemn warning (verse 30). That is to say, it was precisely in this ascription that their blasphemous words against the Holy Spirit culminated, or, at least, that their words approached most dangerously the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Spirit. It might infer a dangerous approach to blasphemy against the Spirit by whom He wrought His mighty works to say that He wrought them by means of Beelzebul. But He was able to argue that question. The assertion that He in whom the Holy Spirit dwelt beyond measure was possessed (instead) by an unclean Spirit, advanced so far beyond this, however, that not argument but quick warning was demanded.

The solemnity with which Mark represents Jesus as introducing the declaration regarding blasphemy is marked by its opening formula: "Verily, I say unto you . . ." And the weight given to it by this solemn opening formula is sustained throughout in the stately march of its words. The declaration begins with an impressive proclamation of the forgivableness, in the wide mercy of God, of all human sin. The words are so arranged as to throw the emphasis upon the universality of this forgivableness:[48] "Verily, I say unto you, that *all things* shall be forgiven to the sons of men" — a solemn periphrasis for the mere "to men." Then this universal "all things" is more closely defined according to its nature, all "acts of sin"; and then the specific sins now more particularly in mind are brought to sight, — all "the blasphemies wherewithsoever they may blaspheme." The effect is to create a most moving sense of the amplitude of the divine forgiveness. All the acts of sin which the sons of men may commit; all the blasphemies wherewith they may blaspheme: all these may be forgiven. It is with the force of a great contrast that the single exception is then brought in: all, all is forgivable except this one thing: "But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost" — the particular form of the designation is chosen which throws the emphasis on His quality of *holiness*[49] — "hath not forgiveness." This was startling enough: but it is rendered even more so by the addition emphatically at the end, of the awful words — "for ever": "hath not forgiveness — for ever." And then the already strained emphasis is still further enhanced by a repetition of the declaration of the hopelessness of this sin, in the negative form: "But is guilty of an eternal sin," — a sin, that is, which can never in all eternity be expiated or remitted. At the end, the Evangelist adds under the influence of the dread solemnity of the whole, the justification of this terrible warning. "Because," he says, "they said, He hath an unclean spirit." Because they accused Him of being possessed by an unclean spirit, He thus in awe-inspiring words warns them that blasphemy against that Spirit which is holiness itself, by whom He was really informed, is an eternally unforgivable sin.

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[48] Meyer: "The order of the words places them so far apart as to place a great emphasis on πάντα." So also Weiss, Holtzmann and others.

The terms "blaspheme," "blasphemy," are obviously employed in this passage in their highest sense of irreverent and impious speech with respect to the Divine Being. The words, no doubt, are capable of employment in a more general sense, to express any reviling or calumniating speech against men. They are actually used in this general sense in the New Testament, including (though with Jesus only as their object) the

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[49] Τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον; cf. Swete *in loc.*: "The repeated article brings the holiness of the Spirit into prominence."

Synoptic Gospels (Mt. xxvii. 39, Mk. xv. 29, Lk. xxii. 65, xxiii. 39). As the discourse of which it forms the climax has its start in a defamatory speech concerning Jesus, it might be colorably contended that they bear this more general sense in our passage.[50] But the extreme elevation of the language scarcely admits of this lower interpretation of the terms on which the whole turns as on its hinge. Why should such solemn assurance be given that among all the sins which will be forgiven the sons of men shall be included even (the "and" has a slight ascensive force) "the railings wherewith they may rail" — unless those "railings" possessed some special heinousness, as, for example, sins against the majesty of God? Otherwise, this sentence, in other respects so impressive in diction, would end on a sad anti-climax. It would be equivalent to saying: All their robberies and adulteries and murders shall be forgiven to men, yea even whatever bad language they may use. A similar incongruity would be created with the succeeding context, were the general sense of the terms insisted upon here. The heightening of the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would lose its force if the contrast against which it is thrown up were nothing more than detraction of our neighbors. The full effect of the passage becomes apparent only when we recognize that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is set as unforgivable over against other — not merely slanders but — veritable blasphemies, described as capable of being pardoned. Moreover the terms "to blaspheme," "blasphemy," when used absolutely, had acquired a technical meaning practically equivalent to these terms in our current English,[51] and they cannot be taken in a lower sense here without violence. No simple reader could possibly understand them in any other sense than that of insults to the Divine Being.

It is, no doubt, a startling result of distinguishing blasphemy against the Holy Spirit from blasphemies against God in general, that thus the Holy Spirit is set over against God in general and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is declared more unpardonable than general blasphemy against God. Startling as this result is, however, it must just be accepted; it is impossible to believe that the contrast in our passage lies only between blasphemy against God and slander against fellow-men — as if what were said were, You can calumniate your fellow-men and it may be forgiven, but if you blaspheme God there is no forgiveness — for ever. We must not be stumbled by the indications of a Trinitarian background in Jesus' speech. Such indications pervade His speech in much greater measure than is commonly recognized. They are present, indeed, in all the expressions of His divine self-consciousness, and we should not forget that it is in His words that the Trinitarian formula finds its most precise enunciation in the New Testament (Mt. xxviii. 19). Meanwhile, what is necessary to recognize at the moment is only that Jesus here declares that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit specifically, not blasphemy in general, is unforgivable; and that He declares this with an emphasis which can only be understood as singling this sin out among all sins as a sin of very singular heinousness. The reason of this seems to reside in the fact that the holiness of God is especially manifested in the Holy Spirit. His designation here is accordingly so phrased as to throw His holiness particularly into prominence: "But whosoever shall blaspheme against the Spirit, that Holy One."[52] Because the holiness of God is peculiarly manifested in the Spirit, whose very name is Holy,[53] insulting words spoken against this Holy Spirit are a peculiarly heinous sin.

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[50] They are so explained, for example, by Wellhausen *in loc.* A parallel to the passage so understood is found in I Sam. ii. 25.

[51] The verb: Mt. ix. 3, xxvi. 65; Mk. ii. 7; Jno. x. 36, but cf. Lk. xxii. 65; and the noun: Mt. xii. 31, xxvi. 65; Lk. v. 21; Jno. x. 33, but cf. Mt. xv. 19; Mk. xii. 22.

Mark reports only the contrast which Jesus drew between blasphemy of specifically the Holy Spirit and blasphemy in general. He communicates no specific declaration with respect to the pardonableness of blasphemy against Jesus' own person. The inference to be drawn from this omission may be variously

[52] Τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον not τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα as in Lk. xii. 10 or the simple τὸ πνεῦμα of Mt. xii. 31 (but in the more emphatic repetition of verse 32 τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον as in Mk. iii. 29).

[53] Cf. Is. lvii. 15.

conceived. It may be said that Jesus (according to Mark's conception) never thought of injurious words spoken against His person as "blasphemy." Conscious of His (mere, perhaps sinful) humanity, and setting Himself in all His thought in contrast with God, as a humble creature of His hands, He cannot speak of "blasphemy" with reference to Himself, but only with reference to God, inclusive of course of the Holy Spirit. He can contrast blasphemy against the Holy Ghost and blasphemy against God in general, but not "blasphemy" against Himself and blasphemy against God, the Holy Spirit. Or, more subtly seeking the same end — the presentation of Jesus as in His own estimate of Himself, merely a human being — it may be said that Jesus identifies here opprobrious words against Himself with blasphemy against the Holy Spirit and means to declare that they are the unpardonable sin.[54] The occasion of His remarks was the ascription to Him of demoniacal possession, and the attribution of His miracles to Satanic agency. This He declares to be unpardonable blasphemy, because He really has within Him the Divine Spirit and works His miracles by the Spirit, that is to say, by "the finger" of God. To vilify Him is unpardonably to blaspheme the Holy Spirit within Him by whom all His works are wrought. That the injurious words spoken against Him when it was declared that He was possessed of a demon are represented by Him as blasphemy (or as coming very near to blasphemy) of the Holy Spirit is indeed clear: that is precisely what Mark affirms in verse 30. But this does not identify all opprobrious words against His person with blasphemy against the Holy Spirit: it rather distinguishes between His person and that of the Spirit, the point of the warning being that such words against Him as these particular words approached to the unpardonable sin because they expressly assailed not Him but the Spirit working in Him. In Mark's report, therefore, there is no express reference to blasphemy against the Son of Man and if it is included at all it must be included in the general reference to " the blasphemies wherewithsoever the sons of men blaspheme "; and these all, with the sole exception of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, are expressly declared to be forgivable. Since only blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unpardonable, then, of course blasphemy against His own person is already declared to be pardonable and there is no clamant need of explicating further so obvious a fact. With this understanding of the implications of the passage it stands in harmony with the conception of Jesus' person which underlies the whole of Mark's Gospel (cf. e.g., xiii. 32) and with the more explicated assertion of his companion Evangelists in this place, both of whom speak of a blasphemy of the Son of Man which — like these undefined blasphemies spoken of by Mark — is pardonable. Unless there is some decisive reason why this should not be included in these, it is only reasonable to see it in them.[55] Mark in that case does not explicitly adduce blasphemy against the Son of Man as pardonable only because its pardonableness is already sufficiently asserted in the emphasized declaration that all blasphemies, with the sole exception of that against the Holy Spirit, are pardonable.

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[54] Cf. H. J. Holtzmann, "Synoptiker"^{3} 1901, p. 128: "Here, therefore in contrast with Mt. xii. 32; Lk. xii. 10 the unforgivable sin consists precisely in blasphemy of Jesus, who, no doubt, possesses His power of exorcism through the Spirit, Mt. xii. 28." Similarly cf. P. W. Schmiedel, "Protestantische Monatshefte," ii. (1898) p. 304: "With Mark, blasphemy of the Messiah is thought to be by no means forgivable, since he expressly indicates (verse 30) as the occasion of the declaration, the contention of the opponents from verse 22 that Jesus was in collusion with Beelzebul or even possessed by him, and therefore wishes to say that there lies in this a blasphemy of the Holy Spirit working in Jesus."

Let us now look somewhat closely at the reports of the other Evangelists.

Luke gives the declaration its most compressed form, and places it in a wholly different connection from that in which it appears in Mark and Matthew. It may well be, indeed, that he is recording a different utterance of Jesus' of the same general purport. There is no intrinsic reason why Jesus may not have made such a declaration more than once. In any event, however, the declaration given by Luke is of the same general contents as that given by Mark and Matthew.

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[55] Cf. Meyer (E. T. i. p. 59): " The less is it to be said that Mark places on a par the blasphemy against the Person of Jesus (Mt. xii. 31 f.) and that against the Holy Spirit (Köstlin, p. 318), or that he has 'already given up' the former blasphemy (Hilgenfeld). It is included in fact, in verse 28." This note is retained by Weiss.

It is not a little difficult to be quite sure of the exact reference of the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which is spoken of in Luke's report. On the face of it the declaration is quite general, that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit shall not be forgiven; and no closer definition is supplied by the context. We may conjecture that the reference is to blasphemy of the Holy Spirit speaking in the disciples when put upon their trial (verses 11, 12),[56] or that the denial of the Son (verse 9) is here declared to be, when the act not of His enemies, but of His disciples, not merely "speaking a word against the Son of Man," but actually the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, operative in them.[57] But such conjectures have little to support them.

There is a certain parallelism between the two clauses of verse 10 and those of verses 8, 9, which may warrant us in taking the two pairs of antitheses together as alike under the influence of the solemn opening phrase: "But I say unto you" (verse 8). In that case, we have here two combined encouragements and warnings:

(1a) "Every one who shall confess Me before men, him shall the Son of Man also confess before the angels of God:

> (1b) But he that denieth Me in the presence of men, shall be denied in the presence of the angels of God.

(2a) And every one who shall speak a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him:

> (2b) But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven."

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[56] So J. Weiss. Cf. Th. Zahn who broadens it to include the whole witnessing work of the disciples.

[57] So Hofmann, "Schriftbeweis" ii. 2, p. 342. Cf. especially G. L. Hahn's note.

Thus a gnomic character attaches to these twin declarations which lends them great impressiveness and gives to each member of each of them almost equal force. We must, it seems, assume, then, that our Lord advancing, in verse 10, to the climax of His combined encouragement and warning, makes two declarations of generally equal importance, — that to wit, blasphemy against His own person will be forgiven, and blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. Closer definition wherein either blasphemy against His person or blasphemy against the Spirit consists is lacking, and would perhaps be out of place in such crisp, proverbial utterances.

We have spoken of " blasphemy " in both clauses, because it seems quite clear that the variation in their language, from " every one who *shall speak a word* against the Son of Man " in the former, to " to him who *blasphemeth* the Holy Ghost " in the latter, is without significance (cf. Mt. xii. 32, where " speak against " is common to both clauses).[58] Obviously the contrast between the two cases consists not in any difference in the nature of the offence committed, but in some difference in the persons against whom the offence is committed. What is in effect declared is that an offence will be forgiven when committed against the Son of Man which will not be forgiven when committed against the Holy Spirit. There is undoubtedly suggested here a certain subordination of the Son of Man to the Holy Spirit, — if we cannot say exactly in dignity of person, yet in the heinousness of the sin of blasphemy when committed against the two respectively. The ground of this distinction is in no way intimated unless it be hinted by the designations by which the two persons are described — " the Son of Man " and " the Holy Spirit." It is difficult to discover, however, in these designations, the desired implications of lowliness on the one hand and of exaltation on the other. " The Son of Man " is an exalted title and is employed to suggest the humiliation rather than the humility of Jesus' life on earth;

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[58] Godet (E. T. ii. p. 93) on the contrary emphasizes the difference, as if the forgivableness of the " speaking a word against " the Son of Man depended on the precise point that this was not a " blasphemous " word.

the form of the title " the Holy Spirit " here is not (as in Mk. iii. 29) that which most strongly emphasizes His holiness and consequently His exaltation. Perhaps it would be wise to read the two designations, therefore, so far as simply denotative and not to seek in them for subtle contrasting connotations.

It is meanwhile easy also to misinterpret the contrast in dignity between the two persons involved in the differing treatment of blasphemy against them. It is of immense significance that Jesus should have thought it important to assure his followers that blasphemy against His person could be forgiven.[59] It would be bathos to say that every one who spoke a word against a man could be forgiven but not he who blasphemed the Holy Ghost. A high sense of the dignity of His person underlies the mere adduction of the case of blasphemy against Himself as a sin that might be forgiven. Otherwise that might go without saying. No doubt the immediately preceding declaration that those who denied Him would be denied before the angels of God (verse 9) somewhat prepares the way for such a further declaration. But that cannot empty of its significance the setting side by side of the Son of Man and Holy Spirit as if they had something in common which required that any difference in dealing with sins against them should be expressly notified. The title " Son of Man " moreover is taken up from verse 8 where it is a title of dignity. The effect of its repetition in verse 10 is clearly to aggravate the sin of speaking against Him: the reason why this sin is forgivable cannot be, therefore, that it is a little sin. It is the greatness of the grace of Jesus which is celebrated in this promise of forgiveness as truly as it is the heinousness of the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit which is emphasized in the refusal of forgiveness for it in the succeeding clause. We cannot say, then, that the difference in the treatment of blasphemy against the Son of Man and against the Holy Spirit is rooted in an intrinsic difference between the two persons. It must rest on some other ground, and those seem to be led by a right instinct who seek it in the humiliation of the Son of Man in His servant-form on earth,[60] and the culminating manifestation of the holiness of God in the Holy Spirit, — though these things rather underlie the compressed statement before us than find expression in it. It is abundantly clear at all events that there is no depreciation of the dignity of the person of Jesus in the contrast that is drawn between blasphemy against Him as forgivable and blasphemy against the Holy Ghost as unforgivable. That it is possible to blaspheme the Son of Man, itself means that the Son of Man is divine.[61]

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[59] And if we consider to " speak a word against " something less than to " blaspheme " the implication is even more striking.

All the more clear is it that it is not intended to declare that it is only blasphemy against the Son of Man among blasphemies which is capable of forgiveness. The gist of the declaration is not that only blasphemy against the Son of Man is forgivable, but that only blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable. It is the latter, not the former, which is singled out as unique in its treatment. Blasphemy against the Son of Man takes its place, therefore, as one of a class, — the class of forgivable blasphemies. Wherever it may rank within this class, it has its place in this class. In substance of meaning, accordingly, the declaration of Jesus reported by Luke is identical with that reported by Mark. When Mark makes Jesus declare that " all the blasphemies wherewithsoever the sons of men blaspheme," except that against the Holy Spirit, are forgivable, blasphemy against Jesus' own person is naturally included among forgivable blasphemies. When Luke reports Jesus as declaring that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit alone is unforgivable and even blasphemy against the Son of Man may be forgiven, it is necessarily implied that all other blasphemies are forgivable. The essence of both statements is that there is no blasphemy that is unforgivable except that against the Holy Spirit. One explicitly contrasts with this as forgivable, all other blasphemies; the other, even blasphemy against the Son of Man. The ultimate content of both contrasts is the same.

The most notable characteristic of Matthew's report of our Lord's declaration is its comprehensiveness, by which it is

[60] Mt. xx. 28; Mk. x. 45.

[61] Cf. A. B. Bruce *in loc.*

markedly distinguished from the compressed report of Luke. In substance, it combines the reports of Mark and Luke; but it does this in language so different from theirs that it is impossible to suppose that one Evangelist is directly dependent upon another. Matthew is obviously giving us an independent report of the substance of what was said by Jesus.

Matthew alone introduces the declaration by an illative particle, connecting it with the preceding discourse. The connection appears to be with the entire preceding discourse. It was because the Pharisees accused Him of casting out demons by Beelzebul, and because this was obviously absurd, and it was clear to every single eye that it was by the Spirit of God that He was casting out the demons (and therefore in Him the Kingdom of God had come upon them), that He solemnly (" I say unto you ") warns them against blasphemy of the Spirit. This warning is couched in language of intense impressiveness, and is so ordered as to throw the heinousness of blasphemy against the Spirit into the most poignant emphasis. It contains a double declaration of the unforgivableness of this sin. The former of these is more general in character and contrasts this blasphemy with other blasphemies in general (verse 31). The latter advances to a more pungent assertion and contrasts it specifically with blasphemy against the Son of Man, as more heinous than even it. The effect of the whole is to isolate the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit with even startling distinctness and energy as the only sin which is entirely and forever incapable of pardon.

The former member of this striking declaration is clothed in language of extreme and impressive simplicity. " Every sin and blasphemy," we read — the addition " and blasphemy " descending from the genus to the particular species under discussion, and the combination of the terms focussing attention on the sinfulness of blasphemy: " Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven to man, but the blasphemy " — " *the* blasphemy," isolating the particular blasphemy under discussion — " the blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven." " Blasphemy " in the first clause is evidently used in its technical sense and imports insult to the Divine majesty: and "the blasphemy of the Spirit" is separated from this only as a particular from the general. Every term employed is the simplest and most direct attainable, and the construction is wholly free from rhetorical heightening. The simple abstract "sin" is used, instead of the more unusual derivative "acts of sin" of Mark; the simple "blasphemy" instead of Mark's emphasized "the blasphemies wherewithsoever the sons of men blaspheme." The universal "every" is attached simply to its substantives instead of separated from them for increased emphasis. We have the simple "to men" instead of the solemn "to the sons of men" of Mark. Even the simplest designation of the Holy Spirit possible is employed — the mere "the Spirit." The statement takes on, indeed, something of the baldness of a legislative enactment: there is not a superfluous particle in it, and not a single rhetorical flourish. It just simply states a fact of tremendous significance, and leaves it at that: "Every sin (including blasphemy) shall be forgiven to men; but blasphemy of the Spirit shall not be forgiven."

To this naked statement of fact, there is adjoined, now, a repetition which is something more than a repetition. It adds nothing in substance to what was said in the preceding statement. But it adds a great deal to it in tone and effect. It has the nature of a startling specific application of a general doctrine, with the effect of carrying the general doctrine home with tremendous force. All is said when it is said, "Every blasphemy shall be forgiven except blasphemy of the Spirit." But this all is said with quite new energy when it is added: "Even if any one blasphemes the Son of Man, he shall be forgiven, but not if he blasphemes the very Spirit of holiness — no, not for ever." The "and" by which this second member of the declaration is connected with the first, is not merely copulative, nor merely consecutive ("and so"). What follows is not merely an illustration of the general principle or a consequence drawn from it. The "and" has an ascensive force and introduces what is in effect a climax. Perhaps its force may be brought out by rendering it by some such term as "yea": "Every blasphemy shall be forgiven; yea if one blaspheme the Son of Man. . . ." It is not merely *an* instance which is adduced; but *the* instance, which will illustrate above every other instance the incredible reach of the forgiveness that is extended, and which will therefore supply the best background up against which may be thrown the heinousness of blasphemy of the Spirit which cannot be forgiven. The blasphemy which cannot be forgiven when even blasphemy of the Son of Man is forgiven, must be heinous indeed.

That " whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of Man " is just a periphrasis for " whosoever shall blaspheme against the Son of Man " is obvious. There would be an anticlimax if it were made to mean anything less than blasphemy. To declare that every blasphemy shall be forgiven and then add in climacteric illustration of this declaration that even the speaking a word against the Son of Man — which is something less than blasphemy — shall be forgiven would yield only bathos. The progress of the argument requires us, therefore, to take this " speaking a word against the Son of Man " as itself blasphemy in the sense of the preceding declaration. We rise here, not sink, in the definition of the sin. The progress consists in a change, not in the matter of the sin, but in the adduction of an object by which its heinousness is heightened. And, we must add, the heightening is, in the nature of the case, to the extreme limit. Blasphemy against the Son of Man is the extremity of blasphemy which can be forgiven. Beyond that limit, it becomes unforgivable. It is not a little sin, then, which is adduced; it is the greatest of forgivable sins. And therefore the title of dignity, " Son of Man," is employed to designate the object on which it terminates. To blaspheme the Son of Man is a sin so dreadful that it might be thought unforgivable; and the heinousness of the unforgivable sin may be estimated when it is perceived that it is more heinous than this. Clearly the Son of Man is not mere man: it is only because He is not mere man, indeed, that " speaking a word against Him " is blasphemy.

That by " speaking a word against Him " just blasphemy is meant is clear also from the employment of this same phrase in the next clause of blasphemy of the Spirit. For, that this clause must repeat the last clause of the first member of the declaration is beyond dispute: and we do not rise to our climaxes by weakening our expressions. And in this second member all the other expressions are heightened: Jesus designates Himself " the Son of Man " here for the first time in this context; the simple " Spirit " of the former member of the declaration gives place here to the solemnly emphatic " the Spirit, the Holy One "; the simple negative, " shall not be forgiven " of the former member is expanded here to the awe-inspiring, " shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come." It would seem, then, that the periphrasis, " to speak a word against," is treated as a more, rather than a less, impressive way of saying " to blaspheme " than the word itself: it is the thing, not the term, that is condemned, and apparently it is felt that the thing is more precisely, and therefore more forcibly, expressed by the periphrasis than by the simple word, which, after all, is very fairly defined by the periphrasis.

By the employment of this periphrasis in this passage with respect to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit we are aided in determining the precise nature of the sin which our Lord pronounced unforgivable. It would seem that it is just speaking injurious or insulting words against the Holy Spirit; such words as are illustrated, — or at least approached — by the opprobrious attribution of acts of the Holy Spirit to Beelzebul. Matthew does not say, as Mark says, that our Lord has particular reference to the ascription to Him of demoniacal possession. What he says is that our Lord was led to give this tremendous warning to the Pharisees, because they declared that it was by Beelzebul, the prince of the demons, that He was casting out demons, this being in effect an identification of the Holy Spirit by whom He wrought His cures with the foul spirit. He bids them, therefore, to beware. The mercy of God is very wide; every sin and blasphemy may be forgiven to men — except only blasphemy of the Spirit; yea, though one speak a word against the Son of Man it may be forgiven; but if one speak against the Spirit, that Holy One, it shall not be forgiven — to all eternity.

The comprehensiveness of Matthew's report of Jesus' declaration, embracing as it does the substance of both what Mark and what Luke reports, affords a temptation to look upon Matthew's report as artificially made up from a combination of what is reported by the other evangelists. We have already pointed out, however, that the divergence of the language in Matthew's report from that of Mark's and Luke's respectively, renders this hypothesis untenable. If there ever were three reports purporting to give the substance of a single utterance — and actually giving it in complete harmony — which bore decisive marks of literary independence of one another, these three reports do. Nevertheless the temptation to explain the three as two divergent reports in Mark and Luke, and a conflation of them in Matthew, has proved too strong for the Synoptical critics to resist.

Which of the two brief divergent reports is to be held the more original, the critics are less agreed. Wellhausen is sure that Mark, along with Mt. xii. 31, has preserved in substance the original form, and that what was meant by it is that railing against men may be forgiven but not blasphemy against God. According to this view Jesus did not declare blasphemy against His own person to be pardonable, the version of Luke and Mt. xii. 32 resting upon a misunderstanding of the underlying Aramaic phrase for "man" which transmuted it into a title of the Messiah, "the Son of Man," used as a personal self-designation by Jesus.[62] The fundamental assumption here is, of course, that the reason why Jesus did not declare blasphemy against His person to be pardonable is that He never could have connected the idea of blasphemy with that of "speaking a word against" Himself, conceiving of Himself, as He did, as merely a human being.[63] P. W. Schmiedel, on the other hand, is equally sure that the original form has been preserved by Luke, or rather by the fuller Mt. xii. 31, 32, while Mark represents a dogmatic alteration of this in the interests of the dignity of Jesus' person, men having come to entertain so high an opinion of Jesus' person that it offended them to have it said that blasphemy of even the Holy Spirit would be more unpardonable than blasphemy of Him.[64] According to this view Jesus declares speaking a word against Him to be pardonable because He conceives Himself to be only human, while the Holy Spirit is a periphrasis for God: the upshot of His teaching being just that we may speak against men and be forgiven but we cannot blaspheme God and expect pardon. The pathways over which the two interpretations would travel are different; the goal which they reach is the same; Jesus was only human and spoke out of a purely human consciousness.[65]

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[62] Cf. Arnold Meyer and Lietzmann as cited by P. W. Schmiedel, "Protestantische Monatshefte," ii. 1898, p. 304; also "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1848, note 1.

[63] N. Schmidt, "The Prophet of Nazareth," p. 112, has a similar view,

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although he takes Mt. xii. 32 as preserving the original saying, in which, he supposes, *bar nasha,* in the sense of "man," stood in the place now occupied by "the Son of Man," in the sense of Jesus, the Messiah: "He was careful to distinguish between an attack upon a fellow-man and a denunciation of the Spirit that operated in Him, saying: 'If any one speaks against *bar nasha,*— i.e. man — that may be pardoned him, but he that speaks against the Holy Spirit can have no pardon.' No one in the audience could have understood him to say, 'you may blaspheme the Messiah with impunity, but not the Holy Ghost.' The distinction is clearly between the divine spirit and the human instrumentality." C. G. Montefiore, "Synopt. Gospels" ii. p. 624, says quite impartially that this interpretation seems "very strained."

[64] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1848: "In their worship of Jesus it must have appeared to them in itself the greatest possible blasphemy to say that blasphemy against Jesus could be forgiven."

[65] Cf. the discussion of the opposing views in Schmiedel's article in the "Protestantische Monatshefte," ii. 1908, pp. 303–307: an excellent brief account of them is given by S. R. Driver in Hastings' *BD* iv. p. 588, at the close of his article on the "Son of Man." E. von Dobschütz, "Theologische Studien und Kritiken" 85 (1912) p. 340, is sure that we have two reports here, but will not decide which is the more original, contenting himself with remarking that the double attestation gives us peculiar surety that something of the sort was said by Jesus: "When we read in the Mark-tradition (Mk. iii. 28 f.; Mt. xii. 31), 'All sins are forgiven to the sons of men and the blasphemies wherewithsoever they blaspheme, but he who blasphemes the Holy Ghost has no forgiveness forever'; but on the other hand in the Q-tradition (Lk. xii. 10; Mt. xii. 32), 'He who speaketh anything against the Son of Man, that will be forgiven him, but he who speaketh against the Holy Spirit, to him it will

So sure is Schmiedel that Mt. xii. 31, 32 presents to our view a purely human Jesus, that he includes this passage among those "pillar passages" which he announces as the foundation stones of a truly scientific knowledge of Jesus, — on the precise ground that they could never have been invented by worshippers of Jesus (as all the Evangelists were) but must have come to them as part of an authentic tradition of a human Jesus. This true tradition, he contends, was altered by one or another of the Evangelists in accordance with their later worship of Jesus.[66] Jesus here, he tells us, is represented as frankly ranging Himself with men, speaking against whom is pardonable; and as separating Himself from the Spirit of God to speak against whom is unpardonable.[67] That the passage in Matthew will not bear the meaning which Schmiedel puts upon it, we have already seen. Jesus does not place Himself there among men, and subordinate Himself to God in His essential nature. He does not say there that calumniation of men may be forgiven but never blasphemy against God. What He says may be forgiven is precisely blasphemy, in its strict

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not be forgiven (neither in this nor in the future world)'; it is clear that we have before us two conceptions and also two translations: *bar nasa* is in one taken collectively, "sons of men," in the other as the well-known personal self-designation of Jesus. The one is a modification of the other, although it is not altogether easy to say in what direction the theology of the community has worked here; it is clear, however that through this double attestation a declaration of Jesus to His Pharisaic opponents as to unpardonable sin is assured."

[66] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881; cf. col. 1848 (d and note 1). See *The Princeton Theological Review*, April, 1913, pp. 204, 252.

[67] The following is Schmiedel's most lucid statement of his view of the bearing of the passage ("Das vierte Evangelium," etc., p. 33): "In John Jesus knows, then, nothing higher than Himself, the bliss or misery of men for time and eternity is determined by whether they believe or do not believe in His divine origin. In the Synoptics, He knows something higher than Himself. He says in Mt. xii. 31, 32: 'Every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven to men, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whosoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whosoever speaks a word against the Holy Ghost, it will not be forgiven him, either in this world or in the next.' Therefore He places His person below the Holy Spirit, i.e. below the holy work which He advocates." Cf. Karl Thieme, "Die christliche Demut," i. 1906, p. 139.

sense. He declares that speaking a word against His person is blasphemy in the strict sense; and that this may be forgiven only because blasphemy may be forgiven.[68] And though He subordinates Himself to the Holy Spirit, at least in manifestation, to this extent, that blasphemy against Him may be forgiven but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit not, it is illegitimate to interpret this as implying a subordination of Himself to the Spirit in intrinsic dignity of person: blasphemy against God may also be forgiven but blasphemy against the Holy Spirit not. It may be difficult to determine precisely why blasphemy against the Spirit is made unpardonable and blasphemy against the Son of Man not: no doubt the reason lies in some discrimination in the modes of divine manifestation in the two persons. But this difficulty affords no reason for cutting the knot by representing Jesus as definitely subordinating Himself — and God also — in dignity of person to the Holy Spirit.

It has been frequently remarked that it is only in the two passages, Mt. xii. 32 and Lk. xii. 10, that (as, for example,

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[68] W. Beyschlag, "Die Christologie des Neuen Testaments," 1866, p. 24, had written — no doubt with wrong suggestions, but for the final matter very justly, as we think — as follows (we use Bruce's rendering): "Let us consider the relation here indicated between the Son of Man and the Holy Ghost. It is a relation of distinction; and yet of close connection. The distinction is that in the Son of Man the revelation of God to men is made in mediated, and, so far, veiled form; therefore may be misunderstood, so that the blasphemer may always have the benefit of the prayer, 'Forgive them, they know not what they do'; but in the Holy Ghost the revelation is made immediately, inwardly, therefore unmistakably; therefore there is no excuse for the blasphemer. At the same time the Holy Ghost is not thought of as above the Son of Man but in Him. The Son of Man is the man who has the Spirit of God in His entire fulness, whose inmost though unrecognized essence is the Holy Spirit, the man whose human appearance is the absolute revelation of God. To this corresponds the fact, obvious in the text, that the blasphemy of the Son of Man is represented as the most heinous of pardonable sins." A. B. Bruce, "The Humiliation of Christ,"[2] 1881, p. 227, quotes these statements only unsuccessfully to contravert the view that the passage teaches that "offences against the Son of Man are pardonable, but that is all; such sins form the extreme limit of the forgivable." He supposes that Jesus rather means to say "with characteristic magnanimity" that sins against Himself are easily forgivable, because not more heinous than sins against any other good man, and due to the same general cause; and he adopts the view that Jesus' warning turns precisely on this, — that the Pharisees in their injurious imputations were "*not* sinning against *Him,* but against the Holy Ghost."

H. J. Holtzmann expresses it), "a distinction is made between the Spirit as the higher power (*Instanz*) and Jesus as the human vehicle of the Spirit." A somewhat bizarre writer, on that ground, insists that these passages — which, he considers, represent the original form of the declaration — are a Montanistic interpolation into the Gospels, since (as he is reported) "only Montanism places the revelation of the Spirit, the Paraclete, above that of the Apostles of Christ." We cite this extraordinary opinion, not, as we well might, as an example of the lengths to which this kind of criticism can go, — in principle, it is just as sound criticism as that of many who seem to be pillars, — but in order to introduce Schmiedel's, as it seems to us, instructive rejoinder to it. "Certainly," Schmiedel replies, "Montanism was the first to place the Holy Spirit above Jesus — after Jesus Himself. Some effort is made to form an appropriate idea of Montanism: but of what Jesus thought of Himself, none at all. 'Where elsewhere in the Synoptic tradition can anything similar be found?' I should have thought we would have been thankful to find it only once. A pearl does not cease to be genuine merely because it exists in only one example. . . ."[69] Possibly. But meanwhile, it is thus allowed that in this interpretation a meaning is assigned to the passage which is unexampled elsewhere in the Synoptic Gospels, and indeed in the entirety of the Christian literature of the first age; a meaning, that is, so unexpected that surely it cannot be entertained unless it is unassailably shown to be the real meaning of the passage. How little that is the case we have already seen. What Schmiedel is actually doing in his interpretation of the passage is, therefore, importing into the Gospels a conception which is wholly alien to them; and also which, as he expressly admits (for this is the very principle of his criticism), stands in direct contradiction to their whole drift. A human Jesus must be found at all hazards, and if violence is required to find Him in the Evangelical tradition, then violence must be used.[70]

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[69] "Protestantische Monatshefte," ii. (1898) p. 305.

[70] Into the detailed attempts to account for the divergent forms of the whole passage as given by the three Synoptics, on the Two-Document hypoth-

Meanwhile it is unquestionable that the passage contains difficulties. It is not easy to separate clearly blasphemy of the Son of Man from blasphemy of that Holy Spirit by which He wrought His great works of healing upon the possessed. It is not easy to understand in what blasphemy of the Son of Man is a less heinous sin than blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, or why the one is more pardonable than the other. It is not easy indeed to be perfectly sure precisely in what the unpardonable blasphemy of the Holy Spirit consists, or whether our Lord means to convict His opponents of having committed it. We may, of course, form conjectures on these matters; and these conjectures will, no doubt, be more or less plausible; and they may seem to be supported with more or less convincingness by this or that assertion or suggestion of the text or context. The passage itself, however, scarcely gives us decisive instruction on these matters; and on most of them opinions may lawfully differ. They are in any event subjects of perpetual investigation and most of them continue to be zealously debated by the commentators.[71] Many commentators, for example, are eager to make it clear that our Lord does not charge His opponents with having committed the unpardonable sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, but only warns them against committing it.[72] This carries with it, of course, denial

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esis, in its mechanical interpretation, we do not enter. We cannot look upon a discussion like that of Burton Scott Easton, "The Beelzebul Sections," *The Journal of Biblical Literature,* xxxii. (1913) pp. 57–73 as anything more than highly refined speculation without any possibility of attaining valid results.

[71] A good brief *résumé* of the main discussion may be read in Carl Clemen's "Die christliche Lehre von der Sünde," 1897, pp. 89 ff.

[72] For example, Th. Zahn, "Das Evangelium des Matthäus," 1903, pp. 460–466, closing with the statement (p. 466): "Jesus does not yet treat the Pharisees here as such as have already committed the sin against the Holy Spirit, but as such as need to be warned of this ultimate step which they have it in mind to take." Compare the statement on p. 461: "No doubt the Pharisees called the Power by which Jesus healed the possessed, an evil spirit, whereas that Power was in fact the Spirit of God; but they did not blaspheme the Spirit for they did not recognize Him in the Power which worked through Jesus. They rather concluded from the behavior of Jesus, which in their judgment was godless, lawless, and immoral (ix. 3–11, xii. 2–10) that this man wrought these, in themselves, beneficent and praiseworthy miracles by the

that merely to accuse Jesus of working His healings of demoniacs by the aid of Beelzebul, or even of being possessed by Beelzebul, constitutes the unpardonable sin. And the way having thus been opened, a wide field lies open for conjecture as to what does constitute that sin. Despite these deeper mysteries, however, the main implications of the passage are sufficiently clear, and among these implications this one must rank among the clearest — that He who authoritatively makes this great declaration of the relative heinousness of sins, and calmly announces what sins shall and what sins shall not be forgiven, whether in this world or in that which is to come, does not mean to proclaim Himself a mere man, when He declares that he who speaks a word against Him may be forgiven, but not he who speaks a word against the Holy Spirit. Whatever may be the reason for treating blasphemy of the Son of Man as more pardonable than blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, that reason cannot be found in a sheer difference in the intrinsic dignity of the two persons.

The judgment of unbelief on Jesus, we have found occasion to remark, is inevitably that He was mad. As inevitably the judgment of active disbelief on Him must be that He was wicked. Not only in His own day but throughout all time the alternatives constantly stare us in the face — *aut Deus aut non sanus; aut Deus aut non bonus.* If in our own time the latter alternative has retired somewhat into the background, and that

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aid of evil spirits, and thus they blasphemed the Son of Man. This blasphemy would become a blasphemy of the Holy Spirit, however, if they persisted in it, after Jesus had shown them the irrationality of their inference. When and in the measure in which they must recognize that the Power by which Jesus heals is a holy Power, every inimical word against Him becomes a sin against the Holy Spirit." So also G. Wohlenberg, "Das Evangelium des Markus," 1910, p. 115: "That the scribes have committed such blasphemy the Lord does not say. It may even be judged that even their accusation that Jesus had Beelzebul and cast out the demons through the prince of the demons, or as it is said in verse 30, that He had an unclean spirit, does not yet necessarily involve that terrible sin. For the question continually presents itself, how far uncomprehending but well-meant zeal has coöperated here; how far the conscience has been unpricked, unconcerned, when they so dreadfully accused the Lord." For earlier writers to the same effect, see C. Clemen, as cited, p. 91 note.

which imposes itself upon the consciousness of contemporary criticism is that between a Divine Jesus and an "ecstatic" Jesus, as it is euphemistically called, — a paranoiac Jesus, as it really would amount to — that is doubtless in part because, in the languid sceptical temper of our times, and their preoccupation with abstract questions of pure history, little occasion or place has been left for the play of the more violent emotions about our historical findings. At bottom, however, disbelief, when it works itself out, must not merely neglect Jesus but condemn Him: and the ravings of a Nietzsche may serve to keep us in mind that the ultimate alternative is always that of the Pharisees and Scribes. Either Jesus has come forth from God, or we can scarcely avoid declaring Him possessed of the Evil One. He makes or mars the world.[73]

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[73] Compare the striking closing pages of the fourth of Liddon's Bampton Lectures on "*The Divinity of our Lord, etc.*"

III

JESUS' ALLEGED CONFESSION OF SIN

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THE pericope of "the rich young ruler" is found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, and it is associated in all of them with narratives of a common type. In all three it immediately follows the account of Jesus' receiving and blessing little children; and it is clear from Mark's representation (as also indeed from Matthew's[2]) that the incident actually occurred in immediate sequence to that scene. In Luke, these two narratives are immediately preceded by the parable of the Pharisee and Publican praying in the Temple; in Matthew they are immediately succeeded by the parable of the workmen in the vineyard who were surprised that their rewards were not nicely adjusted to what they deemed their relative services. It cannot be by accident that these four narratives, all of which teach a similar lesson, are brought thus into contiguity. It is the burden of them all that the Kingdom of God is a gratuity, not an acquisition; and the effect of bringing them together is to throw a great emphasis upon this, their common teaching.

Perhaps this teaching finds nowhere more pungent intimation than in the declaration of our Lord which forms the core of the account of His reception of the children: "For of such is the kingdom of heaven," (or "of God": Mt. xix. 14; Mk. x. 14; Lk. xviii. 16). These "little children" were, as we learn from Luke, mere babies (Lk. xviii. 15: τὰ βρέφη), which Jesus held in His arms (Mk. x. 16: ἐναγκαλισάμενος; cf. ix. 36 and also Lk. ii. 28).[3] What Jesus says, therefore, is that those who enter the Kingdom of God are like "infants of days." Such infants are not to be debarred from coming [4] to Him, because forsooth they cannot profit by His teaching or profit Him by their service. It is precisely of such [5] as they that the Kingdom of God consists. "And verily I say unto you," He adds, "whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein" (Mk. x. 15: Lk. xviii. 17). The meaning is accurately expressed in Alford's paraphrase (the emphases are his own): "In order for us who are mature to come to Him, we must cast away all that wherein our maturity has caused us to differ from them and *become* LIKE THEM. . . . None can enter God's Kingdom except *as an infant*." But when Alford comes to explain what "as an infant" means, he loses the thread and thinks of the innocence, the simplicity, the trustfulness of childhood, or the like.[6] That in which maturity differs from infancy, however, lies just in its self-dependence and power of self-help. We become " as a little child " when, in the words of the revival hymn which was such an offence to James Anthony Froude, " we cast our deadly doing down " and make our appeal on the sole score of sheer helplessness.

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[1] From *The Princeton Theological Review*, xii. 1914, pp. 177–228.

[2] Accordingly, Th. Zahn, "Das Evangelium des Matthaeus ausgelegt," 1903, p. 589, says correctly (on Mt. xix. 16): "The close chronological connection is assured by the καὶ ἰδού, verse 16, after ἐπορεύθη ἐκεῖθεν, verse 15."

[3] Therefore Zahn, pp. 587–588, is quite right when he comments on Matthew's παιδία: "Little children who were still in the arms (therefore, Lk. xviii. 15 βρέφη), were brought by their mothers or nurses to Jesus."

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[4] T. R. Glover, "The Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire," 1909, p. 121, remarks: "We are apt to forget that 'come' is a Greek verb carrying volition with it." This is scarcely true. Ἔρχομαι expresses rather mere motion, progress: cf. e.g. Mt. ii. 9, vi. 10, vii. 25, 27, ix. 15, x. 13, xviii. 7, xxiii. 35.

[5] That is, not of infants like those now in His presence, but of people like those infants in the qualities which had led to their debarring. Zahn, however (p. 588), reasonably argues that in the τῶν τοιούτων there is included also a τούτων or rather a καὶ τούτων. He soon, however, transforms this into its opposite, as if he were arguing that in a designated τούτων there was also a καὶ τοιούτων included: "not only do the little children belong to the Kingdom and the Kingdom to them, but the Kingdom belongs only to them and to such as have become like them." Similarly Loisy, "Les Évangiles Synoptiques," 1908, ii. p. 205. What our Lord says is that the Kingdom consists not of children, but of those who are like children; actual children are no doubt included, but we must not reverse the emphasis. Even Calvin (*Inst.* IV, xvi. 7 *ad fin.*), arguing for infant baptism, yields to the temptation to reverse it: "When He commands that infants should be permitted to come to Him, nothing is clearer than that He means true infancy. That this may not seem absurd He adds: 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.' But if infants must be included, it cannot be doubtful that by the term 'of such' there are designated infants themselves and also those who are like them."

[6] It would be difficult to go more astray here than A. Loisy does (p. 205): "He profits by the occasion to remind them of the moral worth of infants, and of the merit which belongs to the spirit of infancy. . . . Nothing is opposed to Jesus' having in view infants and those who resemble them in the spirit of candor and of simplicity." C. G. Montefiore ("The Synoptic Gospels," 1909, i. p. 243) is better, though still confused: "The child symbolizes or represents the temper in which the Kingdom must be received. Humble trust,

Zahn, therefore, strikes a much truer note when he comments:[7] " Over against the fancy (*Dünkel*) of the disciples, who ground their claim that the Kingdom belongs to them on their intelligence and will, Jesus reminds them that they must rather, by renunciation of their own intelligence and will, obtain the receptivity (*Empfänglichkeit*) for the blessings and benefit of the Kingdom which the immature children possess of themselves." And so does Wendt:[8] " But in this very respect, of having no claim, so that they could offer nothing but only wish to have something, Jesus finds the ground for the children being permitted to come to Him, that He might show them His love and give them His blessing. For in this unpretentious receptivity He recognizes the necessary condition which must exist in all who will enter the kingdom of God." " Under this childlike character, He does not understand any virtue of childlike blamelessness, but only the receptivity itself (which is the notion impressively emphasized by Him) on the part of those who do not regard themselves as too good or too bad for the offered gift, but receive it with hearty desire." The emphasis which these expositors throw on " receptivity " as the characteristic of infancy — as if it were an active quality — is not drawn from the text but belongs to the habits of thought derived by them from a Lutheran inheritance. It requires to be eliminated before the meaning of our Lord's enunciation can be purely caught. Infancy is char-

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a complete lack of assertiveness, no consciousness of 'merit' or desert, simple confidence and purity, — these are the qualities which Jesus means to indicate in the character of a true child. The Kingdom can only be entered by those who can approach it in such a spirit." New-born babies represent no particular temper, and exemplify no particular spirit: they illustrate a particular condition.

[7] Pp. 588–589.

[8] H. H. Wendt, "The Teaching of Jesus," E. T. ii. pp. 49–50.

acterized by " receptivity " as little as by " blamelessness " or by " trustfulness "; its characteristic is just helpless need. He who receives [9] the Kingdom of God " as a little child " receives it (in this sense) passively; is the pure recipient, not the earner of its blessings. What our Lord here declares is thus, in brief, that no one enters the Kingdom of God save as an infant enters the world, naked and helpless and without any claim upon it whatever.

No more illuminating comment on our Lord's teaching here could easily be imagined than that which is supplied by the immediately succeeding incident, that of the rich young ruler. No sooner had our Lord announced that " whosoever shall not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child, he shall in no wise enter therein," than one appeared before Him bent on making his way into the Kingdom in quite another fashion. And, indeed, if any could hope to acquire it for himself, it might well be supposed to be this eager young man. He had everything to commend him. He was young, he was rich, he was highly placed, he was clean. He was accustomed to desire good things, and, desiring them, he was accustomed to obtain them for himself: and, with the resources at his command, — resources of youthful energy, wealth, position, moral earnestness — he was accustomed to obtain them without much difficulty. He had heard of Jesus, perhaps had heard Him; and he recognized in Him a good man whose counsel were well worth having. And he had conceived a commendable desire for the eternal life which Jesus was proclaiming. What remained but to learn from this good teacher what needed to be done, in order to obtain it? It never occurred to this rich and influential youth, accustomed to get what he wanted, but that this good thing which he now desired might be obtainable at its own proper price; and was he not prepared and fully able to pay the price and so to secure it? It seemed to him an easy thing to purchase eternal life.

[9] Δέχομαι, not λαμβάνω (or αἱρέω) is the word our Lord uses, and despite the wearing off of the edges of the distinction in usage, the difference remains fundamentally good that λαβεῖν is taking, δέξασθαι is receiving.

It was our Lord's painful task, in response to the young man's appeal for guidance, to reveal him to himself in the shallowness of his nature and outlook; to open his eyes to the nature of that eternal life which he sought, in its radical difference from the life he was living; and to make it clear to him that what he had thought so easy to acquire was to be had only at a great price, a price which he might not be willing to pay, a price which he might find it was impossible for him to pay. And it was our Lord's task, further, on the basis of this incident, to carry home poignantly to the consciousness of His disciples the lesson He had already taught them in the incident of the blessing of the little children, that the Kingdom of God is not a thing into which in any case men can buy their way; that they stand before it helpless, and can make their way into it as little as a camel can force itself through the eye of a needle. It may be conferred by God: it cannot be acquired by men.[10]

As the result of his conversation, the young man departed with his countenance fallen,[11] exceeding sorrowful,[12] — the eternal life which he had expected to reach out his hand and take was not for him. And the disciples had had borne in upon them with tremendous force the fundamental fact that salvation[13] in every case of its accomplishment is nothing less than an authentic miracle of divine grace; always and everywhere in the strictest sense impossible with man, and possible only with God, with whom all things are possible. The effect of this teaching, if it was naturally to depress those who sought eternal life by their own efforts, was equally naturally to exhilarate those who were looking to God alone for the blessings of the Kingdom, giving them a higher sense of both their certainty and their value. This surely is the right account to give of Peter's question (Mt. xix. 27; Mk. x. 28; Lk. xviii. 28), with our Lord's response to which the conversation closes. We cannot say, then, with Edersheim:[14] "It almost jars on our ears, and prepares us for still stranger and sadder things to come, when Peter, perhaps as spokesman for the rest, seems to remind the Lord that they had forsaken all to follow Him." Peter rather, his heart swelling with freshly inflamed hope (*spe ex verbis Salvatoris concepta,* remarks Bengel accurately) inquires eagerly (not boastfully but in humble gratitude) into the nature of the blessings which God has in mind for those who have entered the Kingdom.[15] Our Lord meets the inquiry in its own spirit and grants to His followers a splendid vision of their reward, — only closing with words which would leave fixed in their minds the consciousness that all things are reserved to the Divine discretion: "And many shall be last that are first; and first that are last."

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[10] Nothing could be more inapt than to say with Montefiore (1, pp. 243–244); "Wellhausen points out most aptly how Shakespeare [Rich. II, act v, scene v] has felt the contrast between this section [on the blessing of the children] and the section which follows it [on the rich young man]. For *here* the Kingdom is a gift which one must accept as a child, *there* it is only to be won by effort and self-denial." In both sections alike the Kingdom is a pure gift and cannot be earned.

[11] Mk. x. 22, στυγνάσας, full of gloom; cf. Swete's note *in loc.*

[12] Lk. xviii. 23, περίλυπος, hemmed in on all sides by sorrow, so that there is no escape; cf. "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary," 1912, p. 76.

[13] It is worth noting how the terms "eternal life," "the kingdom of God," "salvation" are interchanged in the narrative, as an indication of the sense put upon them by our Lord. In the conversation with the young man, the term used is "eternal life" (Mt. xix. 17, "life"). But on our Lord's turning to His disciples (Mt. xix. 23; Mk. x. 23; Lk. xviii. 24) "the Kingdom of God [heaven]" is substituted for this with no substantial change of meaning. This

There are no substantial differences between the three reports which are given us of this remarkable incident. Each of the Evangelists records details peculiar to himself. Each narrative has its own tone and coloring: Mark's is distinguished by vividness, Luke's by plain straightforwardness, Matthew's

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in turn in all three narratives (Mt. xix. 25; Mk. x. 26; Lk. xviii. 26) is understood by the disciples to be equivalent to "salvation." "Eternal life" appears again at the end (Mt. xix. 29; Mk. x. 30; Lk. xviii. 30).

[14] "Life and Times of Jesus,"[1] ii. p. 343; cf. the even more condemnatory note of Swete on Mk. x. 28, where he seems to suggest that a "tactless frankness" of speech meets us in Mark's report, which Luke already found it desirable to soften, and that Matthew's "what then shall we have" we may hope was never spoken.

[15] Cf. A. Plummer, on Lk. xviii. 28.

by clearness. But it is precisely the same story which is told by them all: the same story in its contents, in its mode of development, in its *dénouement*, in its lesson. Having any one of the three we have it all, presented after the same fashion and with the same force. It has no doubt been common to represent the descriptions of the opening scene, by Mark and Luke on the one hand and by Matthew on the other, as divergent; and this divergence has been magnified, and serious inferences have been drawn from it, derogatory to Matthew's integrity as a historian and injurious to our Lord's dignity as a Divine person and even to His moral perfection. All this rests upon misunderstanding. The wide-spread vogue it has obtained requires, nevertheless, that it shall be carefully looked into.

A simple reading of the opening two verses in the three accounts reveals at once, of course, a formal difference between Mark and Luke on the one side and Matthew on the other in their reports alike of the words in which the young man addressed Jesus and of those in which our Lord responded to his inquiry. In Mark (and Luke) we read that the young man addressed Jesus as "Good Master" and asked Him broadly, "What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" In Matthew, he is represented as addressing Him simply as "Master," and asking Him with more exact definition, "What good thing shall I do that I may have life?" Correspondingly, Jesus is represented in Mark (and Luke) as replying, "Why callest thou me good? No one is good except one, God. Thou knowest the commandments . . ."; but in Matthew, "Why askest thou me concerning the good? One there is that is good. But if thou wishest to enter into life, keep the commandments. . . ." We have spoken of these differences as formal; it would seem to be difficult to magnify them into anything more. Though, naturally, a matter of curious interest, they in no way affect the significance of the story itself. Despite them the two narratives, even at this precise point, yield exactly the same general sense and differ only in the details through which this common sense is brought to expression. To make this evident we need only to attend separately to what each mode of telling the story actually places before us.

According to Matthew, then, scarcely had Jesus issued from the house in which He had received and blessed the children,[16] when an individual (there is a slight emphasis upon his being *one* out of the multitude) came to Him, and, addressing Him as "Master" (that is, "Teacher," or "Rabbi"), asked Him, "What good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?" He is asking, not for general prescriptions of righteousness, but for a particular requirement by doing just which he may secure the eternal life he seeks; and so set is his mind upon this particular good thing that when Jesus refers him to the divine commandments in general, he still demands (verse 18), "Which?" In response to his demand, nevertheless, Jesus points him just to the divine commandments, thus in effect repelling the implication that eternal life can be grounded on anything but that entire righteousness reflected in the law of God; and, behind that, suggesting that it was not instruction in righteousness that the young man needed but the power of a new life. Jesus' reply amounts, thus, to saying: "Why make inquiry concerning the good thing needed? There is One who is good and He has given commandments; keep them." It is the equivalent of, "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them" of Luke xvi. 29. What Jesus actually says is: "Why askest thou me concerning the good? There is One that is good, and,[17] if thou wishest to enter into life, keep His commandments."

The thing to be noted particularly is that no emphasis falls on the enclitic με, and therefore no contrast is intimated between Jesus and the One that is good. The contrast intimated is wholly between the good thing inquired of and the known commandments of God. To avoid the almost inevitable emphasizing of the "me" in a translation, it might be well to omit it altogether for the moment and to paraphrase simply:

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[16] So Zahn correctly, p. 589.

[17] It is the continuative δέ, like *autem:* cf. Meyer *in loc.*

"Why dost thou inquire about the good as if that were a matter still in doubt? God, who is goodness itself, has published the eternal rule of righteousness." Keim,[18] it is true, scoffs at the notion that no contrast is drawn between Jesus and God. "But εἷς," he cries, meaning that quite apart from the με the contrast is inherent in the mere declaration that "there is One" — that is to say, only One — "who is good." There is, however, an inadvertence apparent in this. The declaration that "there is One that is good" does set God in contrast with all others: it is to God in His already published will, not to anyone else whatever, that we are to go to learn the law of life. But it does not set God in contrast specifically with Jesus. So soon as it is read as contrasting God specifically with Jesus an emphasis is necessarily thrown on the enclitic με which it will not bear. Jesus is therefore not contrasting Himself here with God. He is only in the most emphatic way pointing to God and His published law as the unique source of the law of life. His own relation to that God is completely out of sight, and nothing whatever is suggested with reference to it. Zahn is accordingly entirely right when he writes:[19] "For the question of the position Jesus assigns Himself between the one good One who is God and men who are evil, little occasion is given by this pedagogic conversation."

Mark, like Matthew, connects the incident of the rich young man closely with that of the blessing of the little children. It was while Jesus was in the act of coming forth from the house (verse 10) in which the blessing of the children had taken place, for His journeying,[20] that an individual from the crowd (εἷς) came running, and fell on his knees, and, addressing Him by the unusual title of "Good Master," demanded of Him what he should do to inherit eternal life. It is the strangeness of the address, "Good Master" — apparently unexampled in extant Jewish literature[21] — which attracts attention here;

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[18] "Jesus of Nazara," E. T. v. p. 37, note.

[19] P. 590, note 64.

[20] Cf. B. Weiss *in loc.*

[21] Cf. Edersheim, "Life and Times," ii. p. 339: "In no recorded instance was a Jewish Rabbi addressed as 'Good Master'"; A. Plummer, on Lk. xviii.

and naturally it was this which determined the response of Jesus.[22] It threw into relief — as it would not have done had it been more customary — the levity with which the young man approached Jesus of whom he knew so little, with so remarkable a demand. Jesus' response naturally, therefore, takes the form, "Why callest thou me good? No one is good except one, God. Thou knowest the commandments. . . ." This response at first sight seems in itself to be capable of two constructions. We may either fill out: "Thou art wrong in calling me good; this predicate, in any worthy sense of it at least, belongs to none but God." Or we may fill out rather: "There is a great deal involved, if only you appreciated it, in calling me good; for there is no one that is good but one, that is God." The primary objection to the former view is that it presses the contrast beyond the power of the enclitic με to bear. For the με is enclitic here as well as in Matthew, and can be emphasized here as little as there. The emphasis certainly falls not on it, but on the ἀγαθόν.[23] The sense is therefore certainly not that the young

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19: "There is no instance in the whole Talmud of a Rabbi being addressed as 'Good Master': the title was absolutely unknown among the Jews. This, therefore, was an extraordinary address, and perhaps a fulsome compliment"; G. Dalman, "The Words of Jesus," E. T. p. 337: "This address was at variance with actual usage, and, moreover, in the mouth of the speaker was mere insolent flattery." F. Spitta, *ZNTW*, ix. (1908) p. 14, strangely wishes to divide the "Good Master" into two independent designations: "If we keep Mark and Luke alone in view, there is to be remarked first of all, with respect to the address to Jesus common to them, διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, that the difficulty adverted to above, of connecting רַבִּי with the predicate טוֹב, is removed if we take ἀγαθέ as a second address by the side of διδάσκαλε (cf. von Hofmann on Lk. xviii. 18). By this, of course, the stress on the designation of Jesus as ἀγαθός is further strengthened," . . . Lagrange on Mk. x. 17, very properly remarks: "No example is known of a Rabbi being designated thus (רַבִּי טוֹב), but this is no reason for cutting the appellation in two (against Spitta). It is only necessary to note that it exceeds usage and accustomed courtesies."

[22] Cf. Edersheim, ii. p. 339: "The strangeness of such an address from Jewish lips giving only the more reason for taking it up in the reply."

[23] So Swete *in loc.* correctly: "The emphasis is on ἀγαθόν, not on the pronoun. The Lord begins by compelling the enquirer to consider his own words. He had used ἀγαθέ lightly, in a manner which revealed the poverty of his moral conceptions. From that word Christ accordingly starts. . . . The man is summoned to contemplate the absolute ἀγαθωσύνη which is the attribute of God, and to measure himself by that supreme standard."

man had called specifically *Jesus* good; but that he had called Jesus specifically *good*. There is no contrast therefore instituted between Jesus and God. This is the fundamental fact regarding the passage which must rule its whole interpretation.

The sense need not be, however, that Jesus identifies Himself here with God, though the words are in themselves flexible to that interpretation: "Why is it that thou dost thus address me as *good?* Dost thou fully apprehend what is involved in this? Art thou really aware that I am indeed that God who alone is good?" It may rather be that Jesus, without implication as to His own real personality, is only directing attention to God as the only true standard of goodness: "Why dost thou use this strange address of '*Good* Master'? Art thou seeking someone good enough to give sure directions as to eternal life? Hast thou forgotten God? And dost thou not know His commandments?" If it be thought that some slight contrast between Jesus and God is still discoverable, even in this understanding of the passage, and the enclitic με is appealed to in order to forbid even so much emphasis on Jesus' person, the remark may be in place here as truly as it was with regard to Matthew's phrase, that the contrast involved in the words "No one is good except one, God," is not between God and Jesus, but between God and all others. There can be imported into the pasage, in any case, no denial on Jesus' part, either that He is good or that He is God. It is again merely the "They have Moses and the Prophets; let them hear them." The whole emphasis is absorbed in the stress laid upon God's sole right to announce the standard of goodness. The question of the relation of Jesus to this God does not emerge: there is equally no denial that He is God, and no affirmation that He is God.[24]

[24] So J. A. Alexander, on Mk. x. 18: "The goodness of our Lord Himself and His divinity are then not at all in question, and are consequently neither affirmed nor denied"; Swete: "Viewed in this light the words are seen not to touch the question of our Lord's human sinlessness, or of His oneness with the Father"; Wohlenberg: "Whether this predicate does not belong to Him in its complete and full sense is a question into which our Lord does not enter." Lagrange: "But it may be said that the most traditional opinion is that Jesus glorifies His Father without comparing Himself with Him. The question of His own nature is not raised; in responding to the young man He

The young man is merely pointed to the rule which had been given by the good God as a witness to what it is requisite to do that we may be well-pleasing to Him. He is merely bidden not to look elsewhere for prescriptions as to life save in God's revealed will. The search for a master good enough to lead men to life finds its end in God and His commandments.

Obviously the drift of the conversation in Mark (and Luke) is precisely the same as in Matthew. The two narratives are in substance completely consentaneous.[25] It is not to be supposed that either has reported in full detail all that was said. Actual conversations are ordinarily somewhat repetitious: good reports of them faithfully give their gist, in condensation. It has been said that Jane Austen records the conversations at her dinner-parties with such, not faithfulness but, circumstantiality that her reports bore the reader almost as much as the actual conversations would have done. There is no reason to suppose that the Evangelists aimed at such meticulous particularity in their reports of our Lord's conversations. Not all that He said, any more than all that He did (Jno. xx. 30, xxi. 25), has been recorded. Each selects the line of remark which seems to him to embody the pith of what was said; and the skill and faithfulness with which they have done this are attested by such a phenomenon as now faces us, where, amid even a striking diversity in the details reported, a complete harmony is preserved in the substance of the discourse. Wilhelm Wagner[26] makes himself merry indeed over what he

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only takes account of the state of his mind. . . . There cannot be drawn from this passage any conclusion for or against Christological doctrine." Cf. also Plummer on Mt. xix. 10 ff.: "The explanation of 'Why callest thou me good? None is good save one, even God,' belongs to the commentators on Mark (see Swete). Suffice it to say here that Jesus was neither questioning His own sinlessness, nor intimates that the rich man ought not to call Him good unless he recognized Him as divine. The rich man could not have appreciated either of these points. Rather He turns his thoughts from his own inadequate standard of what may win eternal life to the Standard of the Divine Goodness."

[25] Cf. Schanz on Lk. xviii. 18: "The *punctum saliens* in both forms is the reference away from Himself and the reference to God. . . . The two differ only in form."

[26] *ZNTW*, viii. (1907) p. 144.

considers the conceit of Olshausen,[27] who recognizes in both forms of narrative exact historical tradition, and looks upon each as preserving only fragments of what was said. And, no doubt, if the state of the case were as Wagner represents it,— if, that is, the two narratives were mutually contradictory and exclusive of one another, so that one could not say of them, *Sowohl . . . wie . . .* but only *Entweder . . . oder . . .*, Olshausen's treatment of them would be absurd. Since, however, they are entirely in agreement in substance, Olshausen's assumption is a mere matter of course. Each gives us in any case only a portion of what was said. It may be plausibly argued, indeed, that Mark intimates as much by his employment of the imperfect tense when introducing the words reported from the lips of the questioner: ἐπηρώτα.[28] We are told, to be sure, that Mark's imperfects are not significant, that he interchanges them arbitrarily with aorists, and that therefore no inferences can be grounded on them.[29] This contention seems, however, to be overstrained; and in a case — like that now before us — where the present, aorist and imperfect tenses are brought together in close contiguity, their shades of implication can scarcely be wholly neglected. The general fact, however, does not rest upon the interpretation put upon Mark's ἐπηρώτα. It lies in the nature of the case that two accounts of a conversation which agree as to the substance of what was said, but differ slightly in the details reported, are reporting different fragments of the conversation, selected according to the judgment of each writer as the best vehicles of its substance.

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[27] "Synoptische Erklärung der drei ersten Evangelien," on Mt. xix. 17.

[28] Cf. George Salmon, "The Human Element in the Gospels," 1907, p. 400: "It had occurred to me as possible that Mark's imperfect (ἐπηρώτα) might be understood to imply that the rich man had put his question more than once, and that thus there would be no contradiction between Evangelists who recorded different forms in which the question had been put. But I am now disposed rather to think that the imperfect tense indicates that the young man puts a question which he had asked before, and that now, learning of our Lord's approaching departure, he runs up to ask it once more before our Lord goes away." The earlier view is certainly the more plausible.

[29] Cf. the discussion on the subject referred to by P. W. Schmiedel, "Encyclopaedia Biblica," ii. col. 1874, note 1: "Feine, *JPT*, 1887, pp. 45–57, 77; 1888, pp. 405 f.; Holtzmann, *ibid.*, 1878, pp. 168–171, with Weiss' reply, pp. 583–585." B. Weiss, in his "Das Marcusevangelium und seine synoptischen Parallelen," 1872, p. 27, had said of Mark: "The judicious interchange of the descriptive imperfect, of the vivaciously representative present, and of the narrative aorist is far from arbitrary; it is conformed with the greatest accuracy to the whole disposition and intention of the representation, which makes itself clear precisely by means of its careful observation." H. J. Holtzmann declares this overdrawn: the imperfect is often employed merely to give vividness and an autoptic air to the narrative and is "frequently in use by later writers, especially with verbs of saying, giving, sending." He quotes Alex. Buttmann ("Grammatik des N. T. Sprachgebrauchs," 1859, p. 173 [E. T. p. 200]) to the effect that the interchange of aorists and imperfects in historical writing depends only on the caprice of the writer. In reply, Weiss (p. 584)

An account of the relations of the two narratives quite different from this, it is true, is very commonly given. The representation which for the moment seems to be most widely adopted, looks upon Mark's narrative as the original one, and supposes it to have been closely followed by Luke but fundamentally altered by Matthew under the influence of dogmatic considerations. This view implies an interpretation of the narrative of Mark different from that offered above, as well as a different account of the relations of the narratives of the Evangelists to one another. According to it, Mark represents Jesus as repelling the attribution to Him of the epithet "good," because He is conscious of creaturely imperfection; and thus as, in His creaturely humility, setting Himself over against God in the strongest possible contrast. Matthew then is supposed to have drawn back from this representation as deroga-

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reiterates his belief that Mark does not use the imperfect without significance. Feine in response, endeavors to show by examples that Mark uses the imperfect quite arbitrarily, often in quite the sense of the aorist (1888, p. 405 f.), and that especially with regard to ἠρώτα which is only a verb of asking. Matthew uses this verb, when it occurs in a historical tense of the finite verb, always in the aorist (seven times) while Mark uses it in the aorist only six times, but in the imperfect fifteen times, often in the imperfect where Matthew in the parallel passage has the aorist. Facts like these only show, however, that in narrating the facts the two writers present them to this extent from a different point of view, and this is what Buttmann means in the passage cited by Holtzmann, — not that the tenses do not differ in their implications but that it is often a mere matter of the way a writer looks at the same facts which is involved. For the matter in general, see the grammarians; beside Buttmann, § 137, 7, also Winer, § 40, 3, *d,* Blass, § 57, 4, Jelf, § 401, 34.

tory to Jesus' dignity as he conceived it, and to have therefore modified the narrative so that it should no longer imply a repudiation on Jesus' part of either goodness or divinity. That the conception of the drift of Mark's narrative which is assumed in this view is exegetically untenable, we have already endeavored to show. It is already wrecked indeed on the simple enclitic με,[30] which will not allow the contrast between Jesus and God which is its core. That it throws into chief prominence a matter which lies quite apart from the main subject under discussion is also fatal to it. There are, however, general considerations which also quite forbid it. That Matthew should be gratuitously charged with falsifying the text that lay before him in the interests of his doctrinal views is an indefensible procedure. There is no reason to believe Matthew capable of such dishonesty. And why the narrative as it lies in Mark's account should have been less acceptable to Matthew than it was to Mark himself and to Luke remains inexplicable. It is not doubted that the dogmatic standpoint of Matthew was fully shared by Mark and Luke. It is quite certain that, if the meaning put upon Mark's narrative by this conception of it is its true meaning, that fact was wholly unsuspected by either Mark or Luke. And there is no reason to suppose it would have been divined by Matthew either. There can be no doubt that Mark and Luke supposed, when they were narrating this incident, that they were writing down words in full harmony with their reverence for Jesus the Divine Savior, for the expression and justification of which they wrote their Gospels. To attribute to incidents which they record with this intent an exactly contrary significance, a meaning which flatly contradicts their most cherished convictions and the whole tenor of their Gospels, is to charge them with a stupidity in "compiling" their Gospels which is wholly incompatible with the character of the Gospels they have written. A critical theory which is inapplicable except on the assumption of stupidity and dishonesty on the part of such writers as the Evangelists show themselves to be, is condemned from the outset.

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[30] The matter is explained by Blass, "Grammar of N. T. Greek," § 48, 3 (p. 165). Perhaps Mt. x. 32–33 may be profitably compared with our present passage.

Despite its impossibility, however, this theory has of late acquired wide vogue; and it is perhaps worth while to see how it is presented by its chief advocates. We may perhaps permit P. W. Schmiedel to expound it for us. He is speaking at the moment of the Gospel of John and remarks: [31] " And equally unacceptable to this Evangelist would be the record in Mark (x. 17 f.) and Luke, that to the address of a rich man, 'Good Master, what must I do to obtain eternal life?' Jesus replied: 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good except God alone.' And yet beyond question this reply came from Jesus' lips. How little it could have been invented by any one of His worshippers who write in the Gospels, is shown by Matthew. With him (xix. 16 ff.) the rich man asks: 'Master, what good thing must I do that I may have eternal life?' And Jesus answers: 'Why askest thou me concerning the good? There is one that is good.' How does Jesus come by these last words? Should He not rather, since He was asked concerning the good, proceed: 'There is one thing that is good'? and that would not only be the sole suitable reply, because of what had preceded, but also because of what follows: for Jesus says further: 'If, however, thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments.' Accordingly, in Jesus' view, the good concerning which He was asked, consists in keeping the commandments. How did Matthew come by the words: 'There is one that is good'? Only by having before him as he wrote the text of Mark. Here we have our finger on the way in which Matthew with conscious purpose altered this text in its opening words, so that it should no longer be offensive: and on the way in which at the end he has left a few words of it unaltered, which betray to us the manner in which the thing has been done." [32] This representation turns on three hinges. They are, first, that, according to Mark's account, Jesus repels the ascription of goodness to Him because He is conscious of not deserving it; secondly, that Matthew, offended by this attribution to Jesus of a consciousness of sinfulness, has deliberately [33] altered the story so as to remove it; and thirdly, that Matthew has done this so bunglingly as to retain, at an important point, a trait from Mark which is meaningless in his own narrative.[34]

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[31] "Das vierte Evangelium gegenüber den drei ersten" ("Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher I, 8 and 10), 1906, p. 19. Cf. "Encyclopaedia Biblica," ii. 1901, col. 1847; "In Mark x. 17 f. the answer of Jesus to the question, 'Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?' is 'Why callest thou me good? None is good, save God only.' In Mt. xix. 16 f. the question runs, 'Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?' and the first part of the answer corresponds: 'Why askest thou me concerning that which is good?' Very inappropriate, then, is the second part: 'One (masc.) there is who is the good (ὁ ἀγαθός).' Had not Matthew here had before him such a text as that of Mark and Luke, he would certainly, following his own line of thought, have proceeded: 'One (neut.) is the good (τὸ ἀγαθόν),' all the more because the immediate continuation also (verses 17–19), the exhortation to keep the commandments, would have suited so admirably."

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[32] Cf. also Otto Schmiedel, "Die Hauptprobleme der Leben-Jesu-Forschung," [2] 1906, p. 47: "Here also belongs the passage which has been mentioned in another place, where Jesus, in Mk. x. 18, said to the rich young man, 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good except God.' Jesus denies therefore His absolute sinlessness. Matthew (xix. 17), seeks to efface that." At the place referred to (p. 27) he had said: "In Mk. x. 18 Jesus says to the rich young man, 'Why callest thou me good? No man is good except God.' To Matthew (xix. 17), this statement seemed dangerous to the sinlessness of Jesus, and so he changed it to: 'Why askest thou me concerning the good (neuter)?' Now, however, the following: 'No one is good,' &c., naturally no longer fits on." Cf. also the similar representation by W. Heitmüller in Schiele and Zscharnack's "Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart," iii. (1912) col. 359.

[33] Even W. C. Allen declares the differences of Matthew from Mark "probably intentional" changes, and A. Plummer ("Com. on Mt.," pp. 264–265) elaborately explains: "It is quite easy to see *why* Mt. has made these alterations. He could not bring himself to record that Jesus said, 'Why callest thou Me good? None is good save one, even God.' We have seen how readily he omits anything which seems to detract from the Divine nature of the Messiah, such as His asking for information or exhibiting human emotion, and how he loves to emphasize the wonderful features in His mighty works. Such a writer would feel that our Lord's reply, as recorded by Mk. was likely to mislead, and was not likely to be correctly worded; he therefore substitutes what seems to him to be more probable." Wilhelm Brückner ("Protestantische Monatshefte," iv. 1900, p. 423), arguing that Mark looked upon Jesus as merely a creature, supposes that he naturally and without hesitation ascribes to Him the repudiation of the ascription of "Good Master," which Lk. xviii. 18, 19 retains, while at Mt. xix. 16, 17 there is found "a perfectly obvious tendential alteration." H. J. Holtzmann ("Die Synoptiker," p. 268, cf. p. 88) also applies to Matthew's action the opprobrious epithet of "tendential." J. M. Thompson ("Jesus according to S. Mark," 1909, p. 160), considers Matthew's text "a clumsy attempt to get rid of what seemed to him to be a difficulty." F. C. Conybeare (*Hibbert Journal*, I, i. [Oct., 1902], pp. 109, 112), so far improves on this as to attribute this "bit of botching" not to the author

The third of these contentions obviously neutralizes the second. A writer shrewd enough to undertake and so skillfully to begin the dogmatic alterations ascribed to Matthew would be shrewd enough to carry them successfully through. Certainly he would not have deliberately altered Mark's " No one is good except God alone," and yet have altered it so little to his purpose. To have supposed that Matthew, after having taken the trouble to reconstruct the first portion of the conversation of the young man with Jesus in order to adjust it to his own views, should have neglected to reconstruct the second portion of it and have left it in staring contradiction to what he had just written, would have been bad enough. But to suppose that he did not neglect to reconstruct the second portion also, but altered it too, but altered it so bunglingly as to leave it essentially the same in meaning as it was before alteration, and still in crass conflict with his reconstructed version of the former part of the conversation, is past crediting. A critical theory which will not hold unless we suppose not only that Mark and Luke were too stupid to perceive the open meaning of the incident they were recording, but also that Matthew, who was intelligent enough to perceive it and dishonest enough to at-

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of the Gospel of Matthew but to " an ancient corrector who could not bear even the shadow of an insinuation that the Lord was other than 'without sin.' "

[34] Cf. Wellhausen on Mt. xix. 17: " The εἷς ἀγαθός of his model he has retained, although it no longer makes sense. It should logically be 'There is one thing that is good' "; A. Plummer, " Com. on Mt.," p. 264, note: " Somewhat illogically he has left εἷς and ἀγαθός unchanged: it should be ἓν and ἀγαθόν: 'one *thing* is good' "; Montefiore, " The Synopt. Gospels," 1909, ii. p. 694, " Matthew rather awkwardly keeps εἷς ὁ ἀγαθός, which is based on Mark's οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός although the words have really no meaning without the repudiation of 'goodness' as applied to Jesus." The odd thing is that none of the critics appears to have observed that " One thing is good " could scarcely be said by Jesus in this context, when the young man was inquiring after one good thing that he might do and Jesus was pointing him rather to the comprehensive law: " one thing is good " would be out of the key of the whole conversation.

tempt to adjust it to the view of Jesus common to all three, was yet so stupid that he could not carry the adjustment through — although it required only the substitution of an obvious neuter for a baldly impossibly masculine, — is clearly unworthy of serious consideration. It is very plain that such a theory is violently imposed on the texts and is driven through in the face of impossibilities. We have already seen that it is based on a failure to catch the meaning, natural and easy, of either narrative the relations of which it professes to expound: we perceive now that the explanation it offers of these relations is nothing less than absurd. There is no reason to suppose that Matthew would put a meaning — and, be it remembered, an intrinsically unnatural and linguistically impossible meaning — on Mark's narrative which it is certain that neither Mark nor Luke put on it; there is no justification for imagining that, if he did, he was dishonest enough to attempt to reconstruct the narrative so as to bring it into harmony with his own conception of Jesus (which, be it remembered, was Mark's and Luke's also); there is no propriety in assuming that if he undertook such a task he was capable of botching it as he is, on this theory, represented as doing. Whatever may be the relations of these narratives, it is certain that Matthew's was not made out of Mark's; and assuredly not as a dogmatic revision in the interests of our Lord's sinlessness and deity.[35]

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[35] Keim ("Jesus of Nazara," v. p. 37) insists on the priority of Matthew's narrative. In point of fact neither narrative can be derived from the other. And in general, no form of criticism is more uncertain than that, now so diligently prosecuted, which seeks to explain the several forms of narratives in the Synoptics as modifications one of another. P. W. Schmiedel very properly acknowledges ("Encyclopaedia Biblica," ii. col. 1846) that "every assertion, no matter how evident, as to the priority of one Evangelist, and the posteriority of another, in any given passage, will be found to have been turned the other way round by quite a number of scholars of repute." The illustration he gives is characteristic. It is Mk. vi. 3 as compared with Mt. xiii. 55; Lk. iv. 22. "On the one side it is held that Matthew and Luke are here secondary, because they shrink from calling Jesus an artisan; on the other the secondary place is given to Mark because he shrinks from calling Jesus the Son of Joseph." The fundamental fault lies in the primary presupposition that the Evangelists (or their sources) have manipulated their material in the interests of the glorification of Jesus. Omit this unjustified presupposition and no ground

There is no reason, therefore, derivable from this critical speculation why we should desert the natural understanding of Mark's (and Luke's) narrative and its relation to Matthew's which lies on its surface. And our confidence in it will be greatly strengthened, if we will attend for a little to the alternative interpretations of it which have been proposed. These are very numerous and very divergent. They may be arranged, however, in a not unnatural sequence, and we may thus be enabled to survey them without confusion, and to catch their essential significance with some ease.

The interpretation which imposes on Mark's (and Luke's) narrative a repudiation by Jesus of the predicate " good," with its involved contrast of Him with God, was already current among the Arians,[36] and possibly even in certain heretical circles of the second century.[37] It is only natural that it should be widely adopted again in modern Liberal circles. Wilhelm Wagner in an interesting sketch of the history of the interpretation of the passage [38] chooses G. Volkmar as the representative of this mode of interpreting it. In Volkmar's view,[39] what is given expression in Jesus' reply is that in the Kingdom of

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remains for either form of conjecture. An (unsuccessful) effort was made long ago by A. Hilgenfeld (" Kritische Untersuchungen über die Evangelien Justins, der Clementinischen Homilien, und Marcions," 1850, pp. 220 f., 362, 426; " Theologische Jahrbücher," 1853, pp. 207, 235 f.; 1857, pp. 414 ff.; cf. *ZWT*, 1863, pp. 361–362, note 3) to discover an older form of text of which both Mk. (and Lk.) and Mt. are modifications in doctrinal interests; cf. also W. Bousset, " Die Evangeliencitate Justins," 1891, pp. 105–106, and (as a curiosity of critical literature) F. C. Conybeare, *Hibbert Journal*, i. (Oct., 1902) pp. 109–112. See the detached note below (note 88).

[36] So we are told explicitly by Athanasius (Migne, " Pat. Graec.," 26, col. 985 C) and Epiphanius (" Pat. Graec.," 42, col. 229): see also Ambrose (" Pat. Lat.," 16, col. 563) and Augustine (" Pat. Lat.," 42, col. 800); and as well the Clementine Homilies (" Pat. Graec.," 2, coll. 404, 405), on which see Dom Chapman, *ZNTW*, ix. (1908).

[37] Marcion is reported by Epiphanius, *H*. 33, 7 (p. 339, cf. p. 315) to have read the passage: " Call me not good; one is good, even God the Father " (but cf. Hippolytus, " Ref. Haer.," viii. 19). See further Hilgenfeld and Bousset as above, note 35), and especially Th. Zahn " Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons,"[1] ii. 1890, pp. 483 f. See the detached note below (note 88).

[38] *ZNTW*, viii. (1907) p. 156.

[39] Die Evangelien, oder Marcus und die Synopsis," 1870, p. 489.

God proclaimed by Him God is the sole Good, to whom homage is due. God is the supreme Good, and the adoration of Him the highest aim of the Kingdom of God. "Jesus is the announcer and even the King of the Kingdom of God on Earth, but not the supreme Good itself, which is to be adored. The Son of Man sought only to lead man to the perfect worship of God." To make his meaning clearer he adds: "Also He went (Mk. i. 9) to the baptism of repentance in consciousness of sin (*sündbewusst*)." Perhaps, however, the spirit of this interpretation is better expressed by no one than by H. J. Holtzmann [40] who writes: "We see Him who is addressed, in the consciousness of His own incompleteness, in remembrance of His severe moral battles and conflicts, in prevision of the approaching tidal-wave of a last and most violent trial, draw back, point above, and speak the humbly great word: 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good, except God alone' (Mk. x. 17-18; Lk. xviii. 18-19; cf. with this the deflection of Mt. xix. 16-17 which even the dullest eye must recognize as tendential). There is only one who stands above the world, without variableness or the necessity of ethical development, the eternally unchangeable God. By this, Jesus affirmed the fixed and immovable interval which separates Godhead and manhood in the moral sphere, as in Mk. xiii. 32 = Mt. xxiv. 36 He opens the same gulf between the two natures in the intellectual sphere. On both occasions Jesus takes His stand simply on the side of manhood." He goes on to say that the Lord's prayer, which he insists was not merely given to His disciples but was prayed by Jesus in company with His disciples, bears witness to the same effect, in its petitions for forgiveness and for protecton from the evil one.[41] Among English writers J. M. Thompson affords an example of the same general point of view.[42] "The stress in the last sentence is on 'good' not 'me,'" he writes, "but this hardly lessens the force of the passage. It is not enough to suggest that the young man's idea of goodness needed correction, and that Jesus would point him from a wrong to a right meaning of the word. Nor is it Jesus' intention to deny as man any equality with God. The address, 'Good Master' contains no such suggestion. Theology is out of place in this passage, which deals with plain words in a plain way. There is in fact no adequate alternative to the natural interpretation. Jesus did not think Himself 'good' in the sense in which the young man had used the word, and in the sense in which it would be commonly used of God. . . . If He did not at this time feel Himself to be good in the sense in which God is good, neither did He think Himself to be divine in the sense in which God is divine." "A broad distinction is drawn — a distinction which cannot reasonably be confined to the simple ground of 'goodness' — between Jesus and God." Perhaps, however, no more pungent emphasis has been thrown upon this view than that thrown upon it by C. G. Montefiore.[43] "The reply of Jesus," he writes, "is of the utmost significance. It is obvious that no divine being would or could have answered thus. Jesus knew Himself to be a man. . . . Yet it is a noble character which peeps through the fragmentary and one-sided records — none the less noble because we may be sure that of Jesus, both in fact and in his own estimate of Himself, the adage was true: 'there is no man that sinneth not.'"[44]

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[40] "Lehrbuch der NT Theologie," ii. 1897, p. 268.

[41] Cf. also F. Barth, "Die Hauptprobleme des Lebens Jesu,"^{3} 1907, p. 251: "On the one side, Jesus takes His place wholly over against God on the side of man, and confesses Himself to possess the imperfection of human nature" — laying no claim to omniscience (Mk. xiii. 32), omnipotence (Mk. x. 40) or moral perfection (Mk. x. 17 f.). This last passage is misinterpreted if it is made to imply the deity of Christ: "the Christ of dogma would have spoken thus; the historical Jesus on the other hand refuses the predicate 'good,' as belonging to God alone."

[42] "Jesus according to S. Mark," 1909, p. 159, also p. 254.

[43] "The Synoptic Gospels," 1909, i. pp. 246–247.

[44] The attitude of P. W. Schmiedel to the sinlessness of Jesus, and the bearing of our passage upon it, is revealed in the following words from the paper contributed by him to the volume called "Jesus or Christ?" printed as a *Hibbert Journal Supplement* for 1908 (p. 68): — "As far as Jesus is concerned, it is certain that all the writers of the New Testament assumed His sinlessness, even though they speak of it with remarkable infrequency. But we are surely not at liberty to see a proof in this aspect of the matter, when we consider the attitude of veneration in which they stood towards Him, and the kind of being whom they held Him to be" [the meaning is that the testimony of the New Testament writers is invalid, because from their point

The nerve of this interpretation resides of course in the contention that a repudiation of the epithet "good" is necessarily involved in the question, "Why callest thou me good?" (Mk. x. 18; Lk. xviii. 19). This contention is unjustified: whether the question involves a repudiation of the epithet "good," or is a call to a closer consideration of the implications of the original request, is a matter for the context to determine; and the context very decidedly determines it in the latter sense. Nevertheless the contention is often given very vigorous expression; and by no one is it given more vigorous expression than by Wilhelm Wagner, who writes as follows:[45] "Whoever cannot attribute to Jesus the use of language more to conceal than to reveal His thought, whoever rather holds the opinion that Jesus really meant His words in the sense in which they must be understood by every unprejudiced hearer, — cannot help allowing that Jesus in Mk. x. 18 distinctly distinguishes between God and Himself, and that He just as earnestly rejects the predicate ἀγαθός for Himself here, and reserves it for God, as in Mark xiii. 32 he denies knowledge of the day of the Parousia for His own person and ascribes it to the Father alone." Wagner does not admit, however, that in thus repudiating the predicate "good" of Himself, Jesus confesses Himself a sinner. Thus we are advised that it has been found possible to hold to the interpretation of Jesus' response to the young ruler which sees in it a repudiation of the predicate "good," and yet escapes from the ascription of conscious sin to Jesus. There are in fact more ways than one in which this has been attempted. A series of variant interpretations of our passage has thus arisen, differing from one another

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of view they must have held Him sinless]. "Nor can we regard the passage in the Fourth Gospel (viii. 46) as an expression of Jesus Himself in view of the character of the book in which it stands. All the more importance attaches to Mark x. 18: 'Why callest thou me good? There is none good save God.' It is true that philologists are now proving with much zeal that the original Aramaic word means 'gracious' [*gütig*]; but they do not reflect that Jesus cannot have justly regarded Himself as morally good, if He repudiated even the epithet 'gracious.'"

[45] *ZNTW,* viii. (1907) p. 154.

in the sense put upon the term " good " or in the explanation offered of Jesus' intention in repudiating that predicate, but agreeing that He does repudiate it in some sense, not involving the confession of sin on His part. Some account should be given of these mediating methods of exposition.

Wagner himself, in company with a considerable number of recent expositors,[46] wishes to take the term " good " in the sense, not of moral excellence, but of graciousness, kindness. This, in itself attractive, suggestion is rendered nugatory, however, by the unfitness of the address, " Kind Master " as a preparation for Jesus' reply. Johannes Weiss seems to be right when he remarks of the ἀγαθέ: " The questioner clearly wishes to express by it not merely his reverence but also his conviction that Jesus, as a perfect man, is able to give new life and particular information as to the way to eternal life." [47] Jesus' reply puts the sense of moral perfection on the address. The advantage sought by reading the predicate as " gracious " rather than " good," is that in that case its repudiation by Jesus does not imply a confession of sin on His part. " If the word should be so understood," remarks Dalman, " then there is no need to inquire in what sense Jesus disclaims sinlessness." [48] " His sinlessness or moral perfection Jesus has, therefore, not denied in our passage," is Wagner's way of putting it.[49] The inquiry of P. W. Schmiedel whether the repudiation of " kindness " is not also, however, the repudiation of moral goodness,[50] is here very pertinent; and it is observable that Wagner at least does not seem prepared with a plausible answer to it. After declaring that, since what is under discussion is " kindness," Jesus does not deny His sinlessness or moral perfection, that there is no question raised as to that, he continues:[51] " No doubt, however, He does disclaim the predicate ' kind-gracious ' (*Gütig-gnädig*) for His own person and reserve it for God. Should this result nevertheless seem to anyone equally objectionable with Volkmar's exposition, mentioned above, the reply is to be made to him that we must adjust our conception of Jesus to that of the Holy Scriptures and not *vice versa*. . . ." No doubt. Therefore the question presses whether it is easy to believe that the Jesus presented to us, we do not say broadly in the Holy Scriptures, but in the Synoptic Gospels, would repudiate the predicate " kind " or " gracious," when applied to Him, especially with the energy which is supposed in this interpretation of His words. It does not appear that the predicate ἀγαθός is elsewhere in the Synoptics attributed to Jesus, nor is it, for the matter of that, elsewhere attributed to God — and it may be a nice question to which limb of this statement we might consider Mt. xx. 15 a quasi-exception. But surely it is difficult to suppose that the Synoptists, who attribute " compassion " to Jesus more frequently than any other emotion, and one of whose number represents the sponsor of another as summing up Jesus' career as a " going about, doing good " (εὐεργετῶν, Acts x. 38), could have understood Him to be repelling here the attribution to Him of " kindness." And surely this repudiation of the predicate of " kindness " sounds strange upon the lips of the Jesus who is represented by them as declaring that He had compassion upon the multitude (Mt. xv. 32; Mk. viii. 2), and as inviting all those who labor and are heavy laden to come to Him that He might give them rest (Mt. xi. 28).

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[46] For example, G. Dalman, " The Words of Jesus," E. T. p. 337: " The proper translation is ' Kind Master ' "; J. Wellhausen on Mk. x. 18 (p. 86): "'Ἀγαθός means less ' sinless ' than ' gracious ' "; Karl Thieme, " Die christliche Demut," 1906, pp. 106–107; M. J. Lagrange, on Mk. x. 17: " Goodness of heart (Schanz, Wellhausen, Spitta) rather than moral perfection (Loisy, etc); ἀγαθός can mean goodness, it is true, but also the goodness of benevolence (Mt. xx. 15) and this is always the case when in the O. T. it is said that God is ' good ' (Spitta: cf. W. Wagner, *ZNTW*, 1907, pp. 143–161) "; F. Spitta, *ZNTW*, ix. (1908), pp. 12 ff.; J. Lebreton, " Les Origines du Dogme de la Trinité," 1910, p. 235, etc. *Contra*, e.g. Wohlenberg, " Kom. zu Markus," p. 273, note 89; P. W. Schmiedel as above, note 41. Wagner thinks that Justin Martyr already took the ' good ' here in the sense of ' kind '; but see on this the note of J. Moffatt, *The Expositor* for January 1908, p. 84.

[47] Wagner (p. 159, note) criticises Weiss' use of the word " perfect " instead of " good " in this remark, but on the very next page himself equates the terms " sinlessness " and " moral perfection." Cf. what Dalman (p. 338) says in opposition to A. Seeberg's explanation which is similar to that of Weiss.

[48] P. 338.

Wagner endeavors to ease this difficulty by suggesting that like *εὐεργέτης*, which Jesus forbids His disciples to permit themselves to be called (Lk. xxii. 25), *ἀγαθός*, “gracious,” might have come to be employed almost as a divine attribute; and he connects this suggestion with Jesus' disgust at the “honor-hunger” which characterized “the Scribes and Pharisees” of the time, and which provoked Him to forbid His disciples to be called Rabbi or Leader *καθηγητής* (Mt. xxiii. 10). This line of thought had already been carried a step further by Karl Thieme,[52] and before him by Karl Heinrich Weizsäcker.[53] These writers [54] threw the whole burden of Jesus' repudiation of the predicate “good” upon His revulsion from Rabbinical vanity, and hence held that “this interdiction of the designation ‘Good Teacher’ has nothing at all to do with the self-consciousness of Jesus, but is solely a repulsion of the Rabbinical title.” From this point of view, Thieme, who also takes the *ἀγαθός* in the sense of “gracious,” is able to contend that Jesus by no means repudiates that quality for Himself. “According to this interpretation,” he writes,[55] “Jesus defended Himself from involvement in the Rabbinical title-seeking. He repelled it from Himself without giving a single thought to whether He Himself had or had not a right to the title of ‘gracious.’ He did not address Himself here to a solemn deliverance as to His distinction from God, but, painfully affected by the extravagances of the rich man, He gave expression to His old aversion to the whole odious behavior of the Pharisees and Scribes, in a quick and sharply spoken word of reprehension. It is therefore rather an emotional declaration from which may be learned how unlike the Pharisees and Scribes He was."

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[49] P. 160.

[50] See above list, note 44.

[51] Pp. 160–161.

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[52] “Die christliche Demut,” 1906, p. 107.

[53] “Untersuchungen über die evangelische Geschichte,”^{2} 1901, p. 295.

[54] Cf. also J. Lebreton, “Les Origines du Dogme de la Trinité, 1910, pp. 234–235: “It would clearly be a mistake to see in the ‘goodness’ in question here, virtue or moral excellence: and when our Savior attributes it exclusively to God, that is not in order to make it understood that God alone is morally perfect, but no doubt only because He alone is Goodness itself, infinitely beneficent and benignant. Applied to a Rabbi — and the interlocutor of Christ saw in Him nothing more — this designation of ‘Good Master’ was, as Dalman remarks, an ‘insolent flattery’: our Lord repelled it without revealing to an auditor so badly prepared to receive it a property he was far from suspecting. The meaning of the text is very similar to that of a text cited above: ‘Call no man here below Father, for you have but one Father, that is God; and have not yourselves called Masters, for you have only one Master, the Christ.’ The only difference between the two texts is that in the second (Mk. x. 17) the Christ effaces Himself far more before God His Father.”

[55] P. 108.

Attractive as this exposition is it is burdened with the insuperable difficulty that Jesus does not, in point of fact, refuse for Himself any of the titles which He forbids His followers to accept. He forbade them to be called Rabbi or Leader; but He claims both titles for Himself (Mt. xxiii. 8 f.). It is not merely in John (xiii. 13) that He vindicates His right to the titles of Master and Lord. Both are put upon His lips with reference to Himself by the Synoptists also (Mk. xiv. 14; Mt. xxvi. 18; Lk. xxii. 11; Mk. xi. 3; Mt. xxi. 3; Lk. xix. 31), and He constantly and without apparent difficulty accepts them both when applied to Him by others. Thieme himself has to acknowledge that "when He was Himself called Rabbi, He found it right, for He was it, He alone and no other in His little flock." [56] If He revolted against the lust for empty titles of the Scribes and Pharisees, that was because those titles were empty for them; they did not rightly belong to or describe them; were mere vanities with no other function than to gratify pride. He would not have His disciples like the Scribes and Pharisees in this. But it does not follow that He would repel these titles when applied to Himself, to whom they rightfully belonged: in point of fact He did not.[57] There is an essential difference between craving vain titles, and accepting just ones. We may be quite sure that Jesus would not have repudiated the ascription of graciousness to Him unless He had felt that it did not rightly describe Him and that He therefore had no right to it.

A far more widely adopted interpretation of the passage, seeking the same end, accepts the term ἀγαθός in the sense of morally good, but distinguishes between the quality of goodness which is proper to man, and that absolute and indeclinable goodness which belongs to God alone. Jesus, it is said, when He repels the predicate "good" of Himself, and declares that God alone is good, means the term good in its highest, its absolute sense, and in no way implies that He is not good as a man wholly without flaw may be good. Sometimes what is meant by this is that only God is Good-of-Himself (αὐτοάγαθος), has the source of His goodness in Himself; men, though wholly good, can have only a derived goodness, and must owe all their goodness to the goodness of God. Origen,[58] indeed, would carry this distinction far beyond the sphere of creaturely relations, into the Trinitarian relations themselves. According to him our Lord speaks here not as a man but as the Son Himself, and yet separates Himself in His goodness as Son from the Father, the *Fons Deitatis*, from whom is derived all that the Son is. No other goodness exists in the Son as such save that which is in the Father; and when the Savior says that "there is none good save one only, God the Father," He means to declare, not that He, the Son of God, is not good, but that all the goodness in Him is of the Father. God alone is primarily good; the Son and Spirit are good with the goodness of God: while creatures can be said to be good only catachrestically and have in them only an accidental, not an essential goodness. It is not of the subordinationism of Origen, however, that our modern writers are thinking when they say that our Lord, in denying that He was good and reserving this predicate to God alone, meant merely that His goodness was not original with Himself but derived from God the sole source of goodness. They are thinking of the man Jesus who, they suppose, is here referring His goodness to the Father, the source of all goodness. An example of this mode of expounding the passage is supplied by Karl Ullmann in the earlier editions of his famous book on "The Sinlessness of Jesus." [59] According to him what Jesus means is,

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[56] P. 107.

[57] Cf. R. Stier, "The Words of the Lord Jesus," Fourth American Edition, i. p. 360*b*, note: "Never has Jesus anywhere said (if He says so here it is the only time) that anyone honored Him too highly; never did He protest against any degree of love, honor, thanksgiving, adoration (Roos, "Die Lehre J. Christi," p. 79)."

[58] "De Principiis," I, ii. 13.

[59] "Ueber die Sündlosigkeit Jesu. Eine apologetische Bertrachtung."

"If I am good, I am so only in and by means of God, so far as I am one with God," and he expounds his own meaning as follows: "Here, then, ἀγαθός is to be taken in the most pregnant sense: as the ultimate highest source of good, as the absolute good; Jesus is good, but only in His inward complete communion with God, as the expression of the divine; and in this sense He demands of the young man: "Thou must rise above the common human goodness, — and in so far also above me, considered as a man detached from God, as merely a good teacher in the sense of the Rabbis and Pharisees — and hold to the supreme source of all good, and thence there will flow to thee the good, and eternal life." Another example seems to be supplied by A. Plummer's comment on Luke xviii. 19. The young man's defect, he tells us, "was that he trusted too much in himself, too little in God. Jesus reminds him that there is only one source of goodness, whether in action (Matthew), or in character (Mark, Luke), viz., God. He Himself is no exception. His goodness is the goodness of God working in Him. 'The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing. . . . For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself. . . . I can of Myself do nothing; as I hear, I judge: and My judgment is righteous, because I seek not my own will but the will of Him that sent Me' (Jno. v. 19-30). *Non se magistrum non esse, sed magistrum absque Deo nullum bonum esse testatur* (Bede). There is no need to add to this the thought that the goodness of Jesus was the goodness of perfect development (see on ii. 52), whereas the goodness of God is that of absolute

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Hamburg, 1833, p. 112, note; ed. 3, 1836, p. 136. The former of these editions is called the "second, improved and enlarged edition" on the title page, but appears to be the first separately printed edition, the treatise having appeared in the first instance in the "Theologische Studien und Kritiken," i. 1828. Cf. also Ullmann's "Polemisches in Betreff der Sündlosigkeit Jesu" in the *TSK* for 1842. An English translation of "The Sinlessness of Christ" (Edinburgh, 1870, newly issued 1902) was made from the seventh German edition. The passage referred to has been so modified in the later editions that the feature for which it is cited has disappeared.

perfection (Weiss on Mk. xi. 18).”[60] An extraordinary number of expositors have retained the fundamental notion of this interpretation as one, but not the chief, element in their explanations: a clause or two suggesting that the goodness of Jesus finds its source in God is inserted in the midst of other matter. The difficulty with it is that there is nothing in the passage either to suggest or to sustain it. An attempt has, indeed, been made by Karl Wimmer to find a point of attachment for it in what he calls the conditional sense of εἰ μή. Instead of “No one is good except God,” he would render rather, "No one is good if not — that is to say, without, — God"; and then explain this as declaring that goodness cannot exist apart from God. But this is only a curiosity of exegesis.[61]

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[60] Similarly, Henri Bois, “La Personne et l’Oeuvre de Jésus” propounds, and in an article in the *Revue de Théologie et des Questions Religieuses,* xxii. 1 (January, 1913), pp. 40–53, defends the view that Jesus does not indeed confess Himself a sinner yet ranges Himself definitely as subordinate to God in the moral sphere also. He thinks this view “the golden mean” between the “rationalistic” view which makes Jesus acknowledge His sinfulness and the “orthodox” view which makes Him proclaim Himself God, and defends it in the *Revue* article against strictures by A. Berthoud, “Jésus et Dieu,’ 1912. According to Berthoud (see also *Avant-Garde* for April 15, 1907) Jesus proclaimed Himself *in point of goodness* equal to God. He repels the homage of which he was made the object, not because He felt Himself unworthy of it, but because He felt it to be banal. It was not a sense of imperfection which dictated His response; He speaks rather out of a consciousness of purity without flaw, of perfect holiness. He is thus not assimilating Himself with men, but proclaiming Himself equal with God — not indeed metaphysically, but morally. The ideas of immutability, absoluteness, eternity, are not here in question: goodness is a *moral* conception, and it is from a moral point of view only that Jesus feels on an equality with God. Bois rightly rejoins that the moral and metaphysical cannot be thus separated. If Jesus is equal with God in holiness, He is metaphysically the same with God. He cannot be the prototype of the moral law, the sole inspirer and source of all good, without being God, the creator and conservator of the world. Bois does not himself seem to conceive his own interpretation clearly. He cites *both* Dalman, who denies that *moral* good is here in question, and Swete who denies that Jesus’ goodness in any sense is here in question, as if they supported him who thinks that it is precisely of moral good that Jesus is speaking and that He is proclaiming Himself subordinate to the Father precisely with respect to *it.* “Jesus recognizes,” he says, “His subordination over against God even in the moral point of view, — subordination, which is, however, perfectly compatible with the absence of sin.” In this moral subordination of Jesus to God, he recognizes on the one side that His holiness is positive and not negative; but declares on the other side that it finds its whole source in God — that “every idea of the good is in Jesus, an inspiration which He receives from God, the sole absolute good.”

It has been more common, therefore, to seek the contrast which Jesus is supposed to intimate between His goodness and that of God in the essentially developing character of human goodness as distinguished from the absolute goodness of God. A very clear expression is given to this view by the compressed comment of E. P. Gould:[62] "The reason of this question and of the denial of goodness to any one but God which follows it, is that God alone possesses the absolute good. He is what others become. Human goodness is a growth, even where there is no imperfection. It develops, like wisdom, from childhood to youth, and then to manhood. And it was this human goodness which was possessed by Jesus. See Lk. ii. 52; Heb. ii. 10, v. 8." The longer comment of H. A. W. Meyer on Mark x. 18, which has in substance been retained by B. Weiss through all of his revisions, is perhaps, however, more typical.[63] "Ingeniously and clearly Jesus makes use of the address, διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, in order to direct the questioner to the highest moral Ideal in whose commands the solution of the question is given (verse 19). He does this in such a manner that He takes the predicate ἀγαθός in the highest moral sense (against Bleek and Klostermann, according to whom He only denies that man

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[61] *TSK,* 1845, p. 128. He argues that εἰ μή is fundamentally conditional, not exclusive, in its meaning; and that, therefore, when Jesus says, "No one is good εἰ μή God," He does not mean that no one except God is good, but that no one without, apart from, God, is good; that the divine goodness is the condition of all other goodness, and all that is good has its ground in God's goodness. Jesus, thus, does not set God over against all others as the only good one, and does not contrast Himself with God, either as not unexceptionally good or as not absolutely good. He only declares that He does not wish to be called good, without the proper recognition that any goodness which belongs to Him has its source in God.

[62] "International Critical Commentary on Mark," Mk. x. 18.

[63] Meyer on Mark, E. T. i. p. 164: We quote from the sixth German edition, which is the first of those prepared by Weiss, p. 152: in ed. 8 (p. 176) which announces itself as revised by Bernhard and Johannes Weiss, it is somewhat compressed; and in ed. 9 in which Johannes Weiss' name falls away again, it remains much as it appears in ed. 8.

as such, and without relation to God can be called good). ‘Thou art wrong in calling me good: this predicate, in its complete conception, belongs to none save One, God.’ Cf. Ch. F. Fritzsche, in “Fritzschior. Opusc.,” pp. 78 ff. This declaration, however, is no evidence against the sinlessness of Jesus; rather, it is the true expression of the distance which human consciousness — even the sinless consciousness as being human — recognizes between itself and the absolute perfection of God (cf. Dorner, “Jesu sündlose Vollkommenheit,” p. 14). For[64] the human perfection is necessarily a *growing* (*werdende*) one, and even in the case of Jesus was conditioned by His advancing development, even though it can respond at every point to the moral ideal (Lk. ii. 52; Heb. v. 8; Lk. iv. 13, xxii. 28. Cf. Ullmann in the *TSK,* 1842, p. 700); the absolute being-good that excludes all having become and becoming so (*das absolute, alles Gewordensein und Werden ausschliessende Gutsein*) pertains only to God who is *verae bonitatis canon et archetypus,* (Beza).”[65] “Even the man Jesus,” adds Meyer (omitted by Weiss) “had to wrestle until He attained the victory and peace of the cross." Quite similarly E. K. A. Riehm[66] writes: "The emphatic 'No one is good except one, God,' or, as the words stand in Matthew, 'One is good,' does not fit in well with the explanation according to which Jesus does not wish to refuse the predicate 'good' for Himself, but wishes to say only that the young man should not, *from his standpoint,* that, namely, He was only a human teacher, address Him as 'Good Master.' We are of the opinion that Christ wishes the word 'good' to be taken in the absolute sense (cf. the ὁ ἀγαθός) and really refuses the predicate in this sense for His own person, and ascribes it to God only. When so understood, the expression does not at all show that Jesus had any other consciousness than that of essential unity with the God-will, but it does show that He was conscious that in His moral development He had not yet reached the highest stage of absolute perfection, which still was therefore proper to God alone."

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[64] This important last sentence is retained verbally through the ninth edition.

[65] Cf. here Paul Feine, “Theologie des NTs,” 1910, p. 28: “He, who had given out of the perfection of His inwardness all the ideal commandments of the Sermon on the Mount, and had conceived the nature of God out of the pure ground of His life in an ethical purity hitherto unknown, declines to be called good. That predicate belongs to God only.” He adds in a note: “It is wrong when many seek to make capital of this declaration in favor of the contention that Jesus was ethically imperfect. When Jesus says to the rich young man, ‘Why callest thou me good?’ or ‘Call me not good’ μή με λέγε ἀγαθόν as Conybeare, *Hibbert Journal,* Oct. 1902, i. pp. 96–113 represents the oldest form, after Marcion, the Clementine Homilies, Tatian, Origen, &c., in Mk. and Lk. xviii. 19), ‘No one is good except *one,* God’ — that is as much a refusal of the address as in the case of the Syro-phoenician woman, Mt. xv. 25 f. As nevertheless in that case, Jesus yet fulfilled the request of the repulsed one, so there occurs here too in the end an answer to the question, ‘*Good* Master, what shall I do to have eternal life?’ He knows the way, and indeed He alone, for His answer culminates in the word, ‘Come and follow me’ (Mk. x. 21). He could not have said that, in the loftiness of His requirement for entrance into the Kingdom, had He not been ‘good.’ We must have an eye for the antithetical, contrast-loving manner of Jesus. Then we can avoid such essential misunderstandings as the repulsed young man fell into.”

Following Wagner's example we may add some further examples of this exposition, taken from dogmaticians. He selects for the purpose R. A. Lipsius and J. Kaftan. The former[67] maintains for Jesus, indeed, a development free from the consciousness of guilt, but nevertheless conceives of Him so humanly as to open a great gulf between His hardly retained integrity and the absolute perfection of God. To wish to deny for Him the possibility of sin or natural temptability, he declares, would abolish the reality of His humanity, for to it the σάρξ of necessity belongs. Jesus was tempted, and that shows that He was not free from inner vacillations and momentary obscurations of His God-consciousness. All of this He no doubt victoriously overcame: but certainly we cannot wonder that He felt impelled to distinguish His goodness, if He so conceived it, from God's absolute goodness. In much the same spirit, Kaftan,[68] will not hear of the attribution of impeccability to Jesus. This would yield, he thinks, only an unmoral notion of Him. Jesus' sinless perfection was a truly moral condition and receives its content from the uninterrupted moral trial to which He was subjected. In Mk. x. 18 " the predicate ἀγαθός applies in its absolute sense to God only, who is ἀπείραστος, not to man who, while living and walking in the world, remains always subject to temptation. It we would wish to find expressed in this declaration of Jesus, instead of this, the consciousness of a moral fault attaching to Him, that would come into contradiction with His testimony with respect to Himself elsewhere. He is the sinlessly perfect man, but He became such by His own act and confirmation, by virtue of actual ethical decision through temptation." If we may appeal to a prophet of our own, we may find the whole tendency and significance of this mode of interpreting the passage very clearly expounded by H. R. Mackintosh.[69] The salutation of the young ruler, he tells us, Jesus waved back with the uncompromising rejoinder, ' None is good save one, even God.' " And then he continues: " The words cannot be a veiled confession of moral delinquency, which certainly would not have taken this ambiguous and all but casual form. What Jesus disclaims, rather, is *God's* perfect goodness. None but God is good with a goodness unchanging and eternal; He only cannot be tempted of evil but rests for ever in unconditioned and immutable perfection. Jesus, on the contrary, learnt obedience by the things which He suffered, being tempted in all points like as we are (Heb. v. 8, iv. 15). In the sense of transcendent superiority to moral conflict and the strenuous obligation to prove His virtue ever afresh in face of new temptation and difficulty, He laid no claim to the absolute goodness of His Father. Which reminds us emphatically that the holiness of Jesus, as displayed in the record of His life, is no automatic effect of a metaphysical substance, but in its perfected form the fruit of continuous moral volition pervaded and sustained by the Spirit. It is at once the Father's gift and progressively realized in an ethical experience. This follows from the moral condition of incarnation."

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[66] "Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes," 1867, p. 383.

[67] "Lehrbuch der Evangelisch-protestantischen Dogmatik,"^{2} 1879, pp. 569 f.

[68] "Dogmatik,"$^{3 \text{ and } 4}$ 1901, p. 441.

That the goodness of Jesus' human nature was a developing goodness, and was not only not while He was on earth but never can be the infinite goodness of God is a matter of course. It is further not inconceivable that in referring to His moral quality He might on occasion quite readily speak of the moral quality of His human nature only, as, in a famous instance, in referring to His knowledge, He has spoken only of His human mind (Mk. xiii. 32). It is certain, still further, that in speaking of God's goodness in our present passage He has the absoluteness of His goodness in view. So far we encounter no grounds of objection to the general line of interpretation which we have just been illustrating. There is no reason in the nature of the case why Jesus might not have contrasted His human goodness with the infinite goodness of God, which is here adverted to. But neither is there any reason obvious why we should suppose Him to wish, at this moment and in the midst of the irrelevant conversation recounted, to interpose a bit of instruction upon the developing character of His human goodness. The remark of Fritzsche seems also pertinent: "the words, *τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν*, do not mean *in what sense* do you call me good? but *why* do you call me good?"[70] If this question has, as Fritzsche also insists, the force of an "objurgation," and means "You wrongly call me good," it is hard to see how Jesus could have expected His interlocutor to understand Him as meaning no more than that His goodness (as respects His human nature) was not the absolute goodness of Deity. To say, 'You are wrong in calling me good, because though, even in my human nature, I am really good, good through and through, good without flaw, I am nevertheless (in my human nature) not good as the infinite God is good,' would not only be a subtlety which this interlocutor could not be expected to follow, but as addressed to him inconsequent. If Jesus means to contrast Himself as not good with God as good, He can scarcely mean less in this context than that He is, in the common sense of the word, not good; that is, that He is not free from sin. The interpretation which would pare this down to a contrast between immaculate goodness and absolute goodness is a refinement unconformable with the simplicity of the language employed and the directness with which the conversation develops. It is idle to appeal to such passages as Job iv. 18, xv. 15, xxv. 5; for the point is, not that the distinction in question is not real, nor that it cannot be expressed in natural language, but that it is not suggested by the language of the present passage and breaks in upon the course of its development.[71] From the dogmatic point of view this interpretation is of course more acceptable than that which sees in the passage a plain confession of sin. It has moreover the great advantage of not giving us a Jesus wholly out of harmony with the Jesus of the rest of the Synoptic tradition, and even perhaps with the Jesus of the remainder of this very narrative — where He speaks of " following " Him as the foundation of the new life. But from the narrower exegetical point of view it is at a disadvantage in comparison with the other; and yet lies open to all the exegetical objections which are fatal to that view.

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[69] " The Doctrine of the Person of Christ," 1912, p. 37.

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[70] "Fritzschiorum Opuscula academica," 1838, p. 79.

Still another modification of the interpretation which supposes Jesus in our passage to repudiate the predicate good, has had large vogue. Jesus, it is said, repudiates this predicate not from His own but from His questioner's point of view. This interpretation, which is very common among the Fathers, is well illustrated by a passage in one of Athanasius' anti-Arian tracts.[72] " And when He says," we read, " ' Why callest thou me good? No one is good except one, God,' God, reckoning Himself among men, spoke this according to His flesh, and with respect to the opinion of him who came to Him. For that one thought Him man only and not God, and the response keeps this opinion in view. For, if you think me a man, He says, and not God, call me not good, for no one is good. For the good does not belong to human nature but to God." It is obvious, that to say that Jesus repudiates the predicate only from the point of view of His interlocutor is to say that He does not really repudiate it at all. It is not strange, therefore, as Montefiore seems to find it,[73] that "the capable Roman Catholic commentator," Schanz, "who honestly insists on the correct translation of this verse," understanding its repudiation to be meant *ad hominem,* adds that "the words do not exclude 'that Jesus as respects His higher nature, may belong to this divine Being.'"[74] And Olshausen is quite logical when he writes:[75] "The questioner saw in Christ a mere διδάσκαλος. . . . To such a conception, however, the ἀγαθός was not suitable. He [Jesus] repudiates, therefore the name and directs him to Him who is Goodness itself. By this, however, the Lord does not deny that He is Himself just the ἀγαθός, because the true God is reflected in Him as His image; only this teaching could not be dogmatically presented to the young man, but should vitally form itself in his own heart." And Keil:[76] "Jesus, taking this predicate in its full sense, uses this address to direct the young man to God as the Supreme Being, when He replies: 'Why callest thou me good?' that is, 'Call me not good,' 'no one is good except one, God.' Jesus by no means repudiates goodness or sinlessness by this, but only says that the predicate would not be suitable for Him if He were nothing more than a διδάσκαλος, for which the young man took Him. This question gives no occasion, however, to instruct the young man thoroughly as to His Divine-human nature." This interpretation, therefore, readily passes into the essentially different one — with which we are on the entirely different ground that Jesus does not in any sense repudiate the goodness attributed to Him — which understands Jesus in His response to be really announcing His deity. The transition from the one to the other of these interpretations is perhaps indicated by such a comment as that of M. Lepin, who writes as follows:[77] "'Why callest thou me good?' says He to the young man who accosts Him; 'No man is good except God only.' The young man, no doubt, saw in the Master only an ordinary Rabbi. Seemingly Jesus refuses, as due to God alone, a title which is given Him only as man. Perhaps, however, He does not refuse it absolutely, and wishes discreetly to insinuate to His interlocutor, or to His disciples, who surrounded Him, that He to whom this title is given and who, as they well know, thoroughly deserves it, is not merely man but is God also. There is indeed nothing to show that our Savior wishes formally to decline such an attribution; that would indeed be strange and out of keeping with His usual attitude; had He not said, 'Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart?' The turn of expression employed, '*Why* callest thou me good?' seems rather intended to cause the young man to reflect upon the unconscious bearing of his appellation. It is thus that on another occasion the Divine Master asked the Jews, '*Why* do the Scribes say that the Christ is the Son of David?' Considering the subsequent reflection made by the Savior, the method employed when He remitted the sins of the paralytic is recalled: 'God only can forgive sins, as you say; well, I claim to forgive sins; and thus I prove my authority to do so!' Similarly here: 'Thou callest me good. The title is deserved: thou thyself hast judged me in comparison with ordinary masters; I therefore do not decline it; but consider well! there is none that is good but God alone!'"

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[71] Cf. what R. Stier excellently says in criticism of Oetinger and Ullmann, in " The Words of the Lord Jesus," i. pp. 360b–361b.

[72] Migne, " Pat. Graec.," xxvi. col. 993 A and B.

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[73] i. p. 246.

[74] Schanz's comment on Mk. x. 18 runs as follows: "Jesus makes use of the address διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ, in order to teach the young man that the word ἀγαθός in its full sense, as the designation of essential, immutable goodness, belongs to God only, so that it is only by conforming to the will of God that blessedness can be attained. Since, however, the young man had addressed Jesus, according to his conception, as a human teacher, even though exalted far above others, Jesus replied to him, as He often does elsewhere, from the standpoint of the questioner (Chrysostom, Jerome, Bede, Euthymius, Theophylact, and all Catholic expositors; Bengel, Olshausen, Ebrard, Keil), an explanation to whom of His Sonship to God was not now in place. No doubt, there must be supplied with οὐδεῖς not λέγεται but only ἐστί (Krüg. 62, 1, 1, Kühn. 417, 2) and the sense of οὐδεῖς εἰ μή is nothing else than *nemo nisi,* i.e., 'none but'; but all this does not exclude that Jesus, with respect to His higher nature, can Himself belong to this Divine Being: 'and He does not say, "Except my Father" that you may learn, that He did not ἐξεκάλυψεν Himself to the young man' (Chrysostom)."

[75] "Biblischer Kommentar,"^{3} i. 1837, pp. 724 f.

[76] On Mark x. 18.

A comment like this brings us to the point of turning away altogether from the "objurgatory" interpretation of our Lord's demand, "Why callest thou me good?" It remains therefore only to read the question simply as a question, that is to say as an incitement to inquiry on the part of the questioner.[78] In that case only two lines of interpretation lie open. Either the question, along with the succeeding clause, "no one is good but one, God," is intended to suggest to the interlocutor that Jesus is Himself divine, or else it is intended to turn attention for the moment away from Jesus altogether and focus it on God. The former line of interpretation has been taken by many and was for long indeed the ruling view.[79] As so understood, so far from suggesting that our Lord is neither divine nor good, it is an assertion that He is both good and divine. Ambrose will supply us with a good example of this interpretation.[80] Inveighing against the Arians who make out that our Lord here denies that He is good, he asks that we consider when, where and with what circumspection our Lord speaks here. "The Son of God," he continues, "speaks in the form of man, and He speaks to a Scribe, — to him, that is, who called the Son of God 'Good Master,' but denied Him to be God. What he does not believe Christ adds, that he may believe in the Son of God, not as a Good Master but as the Good God. For, if wheresoever the 'One God' is named, the Son of God is never separated from the fullness of the Unity, how, when the one God is declared good is the Only-begotten excluded from the fullness of the divine goodness? They must therefore either deny that the Son of God is God, or confess that He is the good God. With heavenly circumspection, then, He said, not 'No one is good but the Father only,' but 'No one is good but God only.' For 'Father' is the proper name of Him who begets, but the 'one God' by no means excludes the Godhead of the Trinity, and therefore extols the Natures: goodness is therefore in the nature of God, and in the nature of God is also the Son of God, and therefore what is predicated is not predicated of the Singularity but of the Unity. Goodness is, then, not denied by the Lord, but such a disciple is rebuked. For when the Scribe said, 'Good Master,' the Lord responded, 'Why callest thou me good?' And that means, 'It is not enough to call me good whom thou dost not believe to be God. I do not seek such disciples, who rather believe in a good master according to manhood than according to Godhead the good God."

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[77] "Jésus Messie et Fils de Dieu.,"[3] 1907, pp. 366 ff. (E. T. "Christ and the Gospel," 1910, pp. 412 ff.).

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[78] A. Plummer, commenting on Lk. xx. 42 (p. 473), suggests that the question there may be intended only to make the Scribe think; and illustrates by a reference to our present passage: "The question 'Why callest thou Me good?' appears to serve a similar purpose. It *seems* to imply that Christ is not to be called good (Mk. x. 18). But it need mean no more than that a young man who addressed Jesus as 'Good Master' ought to reflect as to the significance of such language before making use of it." He compares also Lk. xi. 19 as possibly a similar case.

[79] Cf. Schanz on Lk. xviii. 19: "The most of the Fathers, if they do not call the question an ensnaring one (*versuta,* Ambrose; *tentans,* Jerome, Cyril) and therefore look upon the reply as a repulse, *arguta responsio,* assume that it is meant for the young man's instruction as to the deity of Christ. Jesus, it is said, reproves the ruler for calling Him a good teacher instead of a good God." He cites as expressing this latter view, Ambrose, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, Cyril, Chrysostom, Hilary, Jerome, Augustine, Bede. Cf. A. Plummer, on Lk. xviii. 19 (p. 422, note 1), where Cyril and Ambrose are quoted and Jerome, Basil and Epiphanius referred to (with Maldonatus and Wordsworth among the commentators).

[80] "De Fide," II, 1 (Migne, "Patr. Lat.," 16, col. 563; E. T. "Post Nicene Fathers," second series, x. p. 226).

It is not easy to turn up a modern comment moving on precisely these lines. Perhaps something like it is intended by Friedrich Köster, when he writes: [81] "Should it, now, seem as if Jesus in the words, 'Why callest thou me good,' repels the predicate of goodness from Himself, it is already remarked by Wolf (in *Curis* ad h. l.), *Haec quaestio non negantis est, sed examinantis.* 'Dost thou consider well, when thou callest me good, that this predicate belongs to God alone?' It belongs to Jesus, therefore, only by virtue of His perfect union with the Father." And Rudolf Stier plays upon the same note amid others which go to make up his chord, when he writes: [82] "Christ takes care not to say, *I am not good,* for One only is good, *my Father*. . . . He deals more exactly with the word than the rationalists, who 'exhaust themselves in phrases, call Him the best, noblest, most excellent, most perfect, etc.,' and yet deny His divine dignity. He said then to the young ruler what He must say still more strongly to these modern panegyrists, not in kindness but in anger: 'Why callest thou me good?' He, however, at the same time attests His divinity (although He does not speak plainly of what is concealed) when He who knew no sin affirms: 'None is good save One, that is God.'" In support, he quotes in a note[83] the following dilemma: "Choose then, ye friends of reason, between these two conclusions dictated by reason itself. None is good but the one God; Christ is good; therefore Christ is the one God. Or: none is good but the one God: Christ is not the one God; therefore Christ *is not good*." The sober and pregnant comment of Bengel may also find a place here. "Nevertheless," he writes,[84] "He does not say, I am not good; but, Why dost thou call me good? Just as in Mt. xxii. 43 He does not deny that He, the son of David, is, at one and the same time, also the Lord of David. God is good: there is no goodness without Godhead. This young man perceived in Jesus the presence of goodness in some degree: otherwise he would not have applied to Him: but he did not perceive it in the full extent; otherwise he would not have gone back from Him. Much less did he recognize His Godhead. Wherefore Jesus does not accept from him the title of goodness without the title of Godhead (cf. the '*Why* call ye me Lord, Lord,' Lk. vi. 46); and thereby He vindicates the honor of the Father with whom He is one. See Jno. v. 19. At the same time He causes a ray of His omniscience to enter into the heart of the young man, and shows that the young man has not as yet the knowledge concerning Himself, Jesus Christ, worthy of so exalted a title, which otherwise is altogether appropriate to Him. Wherefore, He does not say, *There is none good save one, that is my Father*, but, *There is none good save*

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[81] *TSK,* 1856, p. 422.

[82] "The Words of the Lord Jesus," i. p. 360b. Cf. p. 361a: "Thou speakest with too much readiness of *doing* good (I too should not be good as thou thinkest, if I were a man as thou supposest)."

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[83] From the "Hom. lit. Correspondenzblatt," 1829, p. 176. He tells us that the same dilemma is well presented also in a sermon by Nitzsch.

[84] Gnomon, on Mk. x. 18.

one, that is, God.' Our Lord often adjusted His words to the capacity of those who questioned Him (Jno. iv. 22)."

Most recent writers, however, who have come to see that our Lord's question is *non negantis sed examinantis,* have also come to see that His purpose here is not inconsequently to proclaim His own deity, but in accordance with the demands of the occasion to point the young man inquiring after a law of life to Him who had once for all proclaimed a perfect law of life.[85] They have, of course, varying ways of expressing the general understanding of the passage common to them all; and they inevitably bring out its implications and connections with more or less completeness, and with more or less penetration.[86] The emphasis seems to be particularly well distributed in a passage in A. Schlatter's "Theology of the New Testament,"[87] and we therefore venture to quote it here. "To him who sought from Him, the Good Master, direction as to the work by which he could secure for himself eternal life, He replied that no one is good except God, but God is really good; and instead of meeting his wish and Himself giving him a commandment, He binds him to the divine commandments in their simple clearness. The desire to obtain, instead of them, a new prescription which should now for the first time assure eternal life, Jesus calls impious, a denial of God, which is made no better by being attributed to Him too. To permit Himself to be praised as good, while at the same time, or even thereby, God's goodness is denied, could not be endured by Jesus. Against this kind of religion He ever spoke as the Son who defended the goodness of the Father against every doubt, and hallowed His commandments as perfect. A glorifying of His own dignity at the cost of God's, a trust in His judgment along with distrust in God's commandments, an exalting of His own goodness along with reproaches against God — meant to Him absolute impossibility." No doubt, there are elements in this statement which are open to criticism. But the main matter comes in it to clear announcement. Jesus' concern here is not to glorify Himself but God: it is not to give any instruction concerning His own person whatever, but to indicate the published will of God as the sole and the perfect prescription for the pleasing of God. In proportion as we wander away from this central thought, we wander away from the real meaning of the passage and misunderstand and misinterpret it.[88]

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[85] Cf. J. A. Dorner, "Ueber Jesu Sündlosigkeit," 1862, pp. 13–14. After showing that Jesus had no intention of leading the young man to suppose that he could enter into life apart from Him, or of pointing him away from Himself when He pointed him to God, Dorner continues: "But the first thing he had need of, as Jesus saw from the light, easy way in which he used the word 'good' was self-knowledge, not the announcement of Christ's mission and dignity, for the understanding of which he still lacked the preconditions; concerning which therefore, in accordance with His method as elsewhere manifested, Jesus meanwhile preserved silence. . . . The purpose of the passage is, therefore, not to deny goodness to the person of Christ, nor to make a positive declaration as to what He is, but to rebuke the frivolous attribution of goodness to a teacher at the cost of reverence to God, and by a striking declaration, which would conquer through its humility, to reveal to the young man his fundamental fault, namely that he took goodness too lightly. That Jesus intended to ascribe sinfulness to Himself is impossible, since that would be out of accord with His other self-expressions as to His redemptive vocation, both in the Synoptics and in John, and with the position He takes in the Kingdom of God. The Evangelists too, as little as the primitive church so understood Him. . . ." Dorner thinks, however, that there is nevertheless intrinsic in the passage a contrast between Jesus' goodness, as human, and God's, as absolute — "since no earthly, creaturely goodness can yet be called perfect, because it is not yet perfected, and is not yet raised beyond temptations and change."

[86] See above, note 24, for some of the commentators of this class.

[87] A. Schlatter, "Die Theologie des NTs," i. 1909, p. 302.

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[88] Detached note on some attempts to discover a more original text than that transmitted by our Gospels, especially F. C. Conybeare's (see notes 35, 36, 37). — H. J. Holtzmann, "Hand-Commentar zum N. T.," i. "Die Synoptiker,"^{3} 1901, p. 88, writes: "This section concerning riches early aroused doubts on the score of the repudiation of the predicate 'good' (Mk. verse 18 = Lk. verse 19). Instead of recognizing the distinction between deity and humanity (see on Mt. vi. 12), which is obliterated by Matthew (verse 18) in a tendential manner, but is otherwise manifoldly witnessed in the early ecclesiastical literature (Bousset, "Justin," pp. 105 f.), the patristic exegesis found here instruction on the deity of Christ as if Jesus' reply presented the major and the address to Him the minor premises of a syllogism, of which the reader is expected to draw the conclusion." At the place referred to in this cautious allusion ("Die Evangeliencitate Justins," &c., 1891, pp. 105–106) Bousset seeks to show from certain early citations of our passage that there existed an early form of the text — from which Matthew's text was derived "by dogmatic adjustment" — in which the latter part of our Lord's response

stood something like what we find in Justin, "Dial." 101^{6}: εἷς ἐστιν ἀγαθὸς ὁ πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς. How the first part of our Lord's reply ran, he seems to be less sure. He supposes, however, that there lay behind Justin a form of text in which were combined a repudiation of the address of "Good Master" and a response to the demand "What shall I do to inherit eternal life?" — much as we find them combined in the Gospel according to the Hebrews. This text, though an earlier source than our Synoptic Gospels, he does not consider the original text (p. 106, note 3). The form preserved in Justin, or something like it, he judges to be more likely to be that. In "Dial." 101^{6} this stands merely τί με λέγεις ἀγαθόν;

In this discussion Bousset makes no advance upon what Hilgenfeld had argued a half-century before ("Kritische Untersuchungen über die Evangelien Justins, der Clementinischen Homilien und Marcians," 1850, pp. 220 f., 362, 426; 'Theologische Jahrbücher," 1853, pp. 207, 235 f.; 1857, pp. 414 ff.; cf. *ZWT*, 1863, pp. 361–362, note 3). That the reading attributed to Marcion by Epiphanius, *H*, 42,^{50} p. 339: μή με λέγεις (p. 315 λέγετε) ἀγαθόν, εἷς ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸς ὁ θεὸς ὁ πατήρ is a divergent text-form and not an interpretation, Hilgenfeld is sure; and that this text form was in circulation beyond Marcionite, or even Gnostic, circles he thinks is shown by its occurrence four times in the Clementine Homilies ("Theol. Jhbb.," 1857, p. 415). Our present Matthew-text preserves from this earlier form the positive clause εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθός. This positive clause is not to be supposed, therefore, to have been made out of the negative form found in our Mark and Luke: οὐδεὶς ἀγαθὸς εἰ μὴ εἷς ὁ θεός. The contrary is the fact: the negative clause (first found in Justin, "Apol.," i. 16) is rather a correction of the positive clause in an anti-Gnostic interest. For the Gnostics interpreted the εἷς ἐστὶν ὁ ἀγαθὸς ὁ πατήρ (in which the ὁ πατήρ is the essential thing) as a distinguishing declaration that the only good God was the Father of Jesus Christ. The difference between the positive and the negative forms is, then, far from unimportant; it was of deep polemical significance. "If this difference seems small, it is nevertheless by means of the negative turn that the contrast between the perfect God and the imperfection of all men is made the sole possible interpretation. And if, now, in our present Matthew-text there is apparent a purpose to exclude the distinction of Jesus from the perfect goodness of God, we recognize in this just a second alteration of this expression, at the basis of which lies already the doctrine of the deity of Christ" ("Theol. Jhbb.," 1857, p. 416). It is an illusion to suppose therefore, that Matthew is made out of Mark: Matthew preserves a reading earlier than Mark's which Mark has set aside in an anti-Gnostic interest. But our present Matthew is a product of a still later revision, — in the interests of the deity of Christ.

A further attempt is made by F. C. Conybeare (*Hibbert Journal,* i. Oct., 1902, pp. 109–112) to validate the Marcionic text as underlying all three of the Synoptics, with the interest shifted now, however, to the opening (instead of the closing) words of our Lord's reply. The contention in which Conybeare is particularly interested is that, in the original text, we have not a question but a categorical injunction: "Call me not good!" And he endeavors to show that this reading held its ground into the fourth century, not in heretical circles only, but also, as at least an alternative reading, among the orthodox (Origen, Athanasius, Didymus, Ephrem). Conybeare does not write with judicial balance or in the spirit of scientific objectivity. He has a thesis to sustain, and pushes matters to such an extreme as to be self-refuting. There would be no reason for entering upon any examination of his contentions except for the fact that some tendency has shown itself of late to accept these speculations whether of Hilgenfeld or of Conybeare as findings of fact, and even to build critical conclusions upon them.

Thus, for example, F. Barth, "Die Hauptprobleme des Lebens Jesu,"[3] 1907, p. 251, describing Jesus' testimony to His person, writes as follows: "That Jesus . . . saw Himself compelled to make clear His position with reference to God . . . by a self designation, we see better in proportion as we closely contemplate this position in detail and convince ourselves that it is a thoroughly peculiar, almost an enigmatical one. On the one hand, Jesus takes His place wholly on the side of man, over against God, and confesses Himself to possess the imperfections of human existence. He lays claim to no omniscience, but declares that He does not know the time of the parousia (Mk. xiii. 32); nor to any omnipotence, for it is not His to make determination as to the places of honor in the Kingdom of heaven (Mk. x. 40). We may be most struck, however, that He also seems to repudiate absolute moral perfection in the answer to the rich young man who asked Him, 'Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?' (Mk. x. 17 f.; Lk. xviii. 18 f.). Jesus responded: 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good but *one*, God.' . . . The reading: 'Why callest thou me good?' (or 'Call me not good!') 'No one is good but one, my Father in heaven'* is no doubt a Gnostic heightening. It would originally emphasize the contrast with the world-maker, the Jewish God, who is not the Father of Jesus and not good (gracious), but righteous and wrathful. The Catholic counterpart to this is formed by the rare reading: "No one is good except God only who has made all things"; here the sole good one is identified precisely with the world-maker. Still more decisively in contrast with it is the change which the Gospel of Matthew contains. . . ." At the point marked by an asterisk he gives a list of vouchers which certainly show that a reading in which "the Father" or "my Father who is in heaven" took the place of "God" in our Lord's response was in early circulation: but it is not so clear that this reading was manufactured by the Gnostics, though no doubt it was utilized by them; and neither is it clear that the alternative reading in the first clause "Call me not good" is a genuine "various reading." And it is certainly not clear that the readings which Barth enumerates, Justin's and Matthew's, illustrate how readily "uncomfortable readings are pushed out of existence." An even better example of the unjustified use of these textual speculations is supplied by Paul Feine, "Theologie des NTs," 1910, p. 28, note, who, in explaining the meaning of our Lord in His response to the young ruler, incorporates, quite simply, these words: "When Jesus says to the rich young man: 'Why callest thou me good?' or 'Call me not good' (μή με λέγε ἀγαθόν, as Conybeare, *Hibbert Journal*, 1902, i. 96–113, represents the oldest form, after Marcion, the Clementine Homilies, Tatian, Origen, etc., in Mk. and Lk. xviii. 19). . . ." A phenomenon like this seems to require that we should subject Conybeare's argument to a sufficiently close scrutiny to bring out its real character.

Conybeare is engaged in seeking out doctrinal modifications of the original text occurring in the text of our Gospels. In the present state of critical opinion it is not unnatural that he fixes at once upon Mt. xix. 17 as an instance. This "bit of botching," as he calls it, however, contrary to the common critical opinion, he attributes not to the author of the Gospel, but, in accordance with his present quest, to an ancient corrector, working on the original text of Matthew "before Matthew was joined in one book with the other two gospels." He is not content however to find "doctrinal modifications" in Matthew's text; he discovers them in the text of Mark and Luke as well. The evidence on which he relies for this discovery, he gives as follows. Marcion, according to Epiphanius, read at Lk. xviii. 19: μή με λέγε ἀγαθόν εἷς ἐστὶν ἀγαθὸς ὁ θεὸς ὁ πατήρ. "Marcion's evidence goes back far behind any other." It is *a priori* unlikely, from Marcion's philosophical views, that he himself made the reading, "Call me not good." And that he did not make it is put beyond doubt by its appearance in the Clementine Homilies also, where, although it appears rather as a citation from Matthew than from Mark-Luke, it *a fortiori* argues the presence of the imperative reading in Mark-Luke. All this is borne out by the persistence of the imperative reading in later writings. In the Old Armenian version of a tract of Athanasius', it appears four times, and though in the present Greek text it is found in only one of these places, the editor tells us it occurs in the best manuscripts in another of them; and we may believe that if the best manuscripts were scrupulously followed it would occur in all four of them. It seems to be presupposed in certain passages in the Armenian version of Ephrem's commentary on Tatian's "Diatessaron," "though the actual citations have been conformed to the ordinary text." It seems likewise to be presupposed in some passages in Origen's commentaries "though the text has been conformed either by the scribes or editors of his MSS."

As marshalled by Conybeare there seems to be presented here a considerable body of evidence. This is, however, illusory. The whole of the later evidence, from Origen to Didymus and Ephrem, may be at once dismissed. No question of reading is raised by it but only of interpretation. To suggest that Tatian must have read the imperative in his text because Ephrem, in commenting on this passage, speaks of Christ as "renouncing the appellation of 'good'" is nothing less than monstrous (cf. Zahn's "Tatians Diatessaron," p. 173). To intimate that Origen must have read the imperative in his text, because he understands the Lord to reject the epithet "good," is so absurd that it reaches almost the level of the sublime. Not only does Origen repeatedly quote the passage and always with the interrogative, not the imperative (e.g. in the first two volumes of the Prussian Academy's edition, I, 9, 5; II, 12, 19; II, 355, 16; in the Commentary on John in the same series, 45, 10; 261, 28); but he explicitly tells us that the interrogative stood in his text of Mark and Luke, — that while Matthew reads, "Why askest thou me concerning the good," "Mark and Luke on the contrary say that the Savior said: 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good except one, God'" ("Com. in Mt.," Tomus xv. 10; Lommatzsch iii. p. 346). Conybeare's dealing with Athanasius and Didymus, however, is so characteristic and therefore so instructive as regards his methods, that it deserves to be quoted at large and examined in some detail. "Among the writings of Athanasius," he writes, "is one called

'About the Epiphany of the Flesh of the God word and against the Arians,' printed in Migne, "Pat. Graec.," xxvi. coll. 984 ff. The text is cited from Mark or Luke four times, viz., col. 985c, col. 993a and b, col. 1012b. In only one of these passages, 993b, has the imperative, μή με λέγε ἀγαθόν survived the efforts both of editor and copyist to keep it out, and won its way into the printed text. But in 985c the editor, Montfaucon, in his note states that it was so read in the three best MSS. In all four passages the Old Armenian version renders, 'Call thou me not good,' so testifying that the Greek MSS. had it. Probably a more accurate editing of these would show that they have it still. In his treatise on the Trinity (c. 337) Didymus also cites the text in the form 'Call thou me not good,' but with condemnation." Possibly it is Conybeare's predilection for things Armenian which has led him astray with reference to Athanasius' reading. The fact is that Athanasius cites the text of Mark and Luke in the form in which it now finds a place in these Gospels, and never otherwise. It stands in this form, therefore in 993a and 1012b where he is directly citing the text: in 993b he is not making a citation; and in 985c, he is citing the text not directly but from the lips of his Arian opponents. There is no evidence to be derived from these passages, therefore, that the text was read by Athanasius in the form "Call me not good." It will repay us to look at the passages.

In 1012b, Athanasius is directly citing Scripture to support a proposition. He argues: "For unless the Holy Spirit were of the essence (τῆς οὐσίας) of the Only Good (τοῦ μόνου ἀγαθοῦ) He would not be called good, since the Lord prohibits Himself to be called good, in so far as He had become man, saying, 'Why callest thou me good? None is good but one, God.' The Holy Spirit, however, is not forbidden by the Scriptures to be called good, as David says, 'Thy good Spirit shall lead me into the right land.'" What we read in the continuous passage embracing both the references, 993a and b, is this: "And when He says: 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good but one, God,' God, reckoning Himself among men, spoke this according to His flesh, and with respect to the opinion of him who came to Him. For that one thought Him man only and not God, and the response keeps this opinion in view. For, if you think me a man, He says, and not God, call me not good, for no one is good. For the good does not belong to human nature but to God." Obviously the "Call me not good" here is not a citation but a free rendering of the sense of the "Why callest thou me good?" which is immediately before formally cited. The final passage, 985c, is more complicated. Athanasius is talking of his Arian opponents. "And now, these people," he says, "if they knew the Holy Scriptures, would not dare to blaspheme the Creator of all things as a creature and a piece of handiwork. For they distort them to us, saying How can [the Son] be like [the Father], or of the Father's essence, when it is written, As the Father has life in Himself, So He has given also to the Son to have life in Himself. There is, they say, a superiority in the giver above the receiver. And, Why callest thou me good? they say, No one is good but one, God. And again, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And once more, Of the last day no one knoweth, not even the Son, except the Father. And again, Whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world. And again, Whom the Father raised from the dead. How then, they say, can He that is raised from the dead be like or of the same nature (ὁμοούσιος) with Him that raised Him?" Here is a series of Scriptural texts in use by the Arians and cited from their lips — Jno. v. 26; Mk. x. 18; Mt. xxvii. 47; Mk. xiii. 2; Jno. x. 26; Gal. i. 1. Some of them are quoted with accuracy (Jno. v. 26; Mt. xxvii. 47; Jno. x. 36). But some of them merely reproduce the sense (Gal. i. 1). Mk. x. 18 is printed as an accurate quotation. But the editor tells us in a note (Migne, "Pat. Graec.," xxvi. col. 986) that in some of the MSS. it is read rather: μή με λέγε, φησίν, ἀγαθόν, that is to say, "Call me not, they say, good." It may well be, as Conybeare contends, that this reading should be put into the text. In this context this would not mean that Athanasius so read it in his Mark, but only at the most that the Arians so read it in their Mark. We say "at the most," for there would be little more reason for supposing that even they so read it in their Mark than for supposing that they read also in their Mark (at xiii. 32): περὶ τῆς ἡμέρας τῆς ἐσχάτης οὐδεὶς οἶδεν, οὐδὲ ὁ υἱός. If this is merely a paraphrase of the meaning, that may equally well be so too.

We presume that the "c. 377" attached to the reference to Didymus' treatise on the Trinity is meant to indicate the column in Migne, "Pat. Graec.," where the passage referred to may be found. No such passage, however, is found at that reference. In coll. 349–352, however, there is a passage which we take to be the one intended. Heb. ii. 24 had just been quoted and commented on; and the discourse continues: "The Son also, however, showed that the deity is one, when He said, 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good but one, God'; but that the three hypostases are of equal dignity and of equal power, by the teaching concerning baptism [that is, by Mt. xxviii. 19]. Not responding to the lawyer who questioned Him temptingly, 'Call me not good' but 'Why callest thou me good?' He showed that He too is good equally with the Father, and from His Father's goodness manifests His own, and demonstrates that He is good generated from God. . . ." It is, of course, conceivable that Didymus is referring here to a rival reading of Mk. x. 18 rejected by him. But there is no likelihood of that being the case. On the face of it, what he says is that this reading is *not* found in Mk. x. 18. We observe in passing that Didymus elsewhere also quotes Mk. x. 18 in the form "Why callest thou me good?" without betraying any consciousness of another reading; e.g. at col. 864: "And the response to the lawyer who temptingly addressed our Lord as a man, 'Good Master' and heard 'Why callest thou me good?' . . . is of this kind."

Thus nothing is left as evidence of the currency of a reading "Call me not good"! but Epiphanius' representation that this was the reading of Marcion's Gospel, supported by the appearance of the passage in this form in the Clementine Homilies. Conybeare seems very sure that Marcion's text read as Epiphanius represents. A glance at the very full note of Zahn at the place ("Geschichte des Neutestamentlichen Kanons,"[1] ii. 1890, pp. 483–484) will show how little this confidence is justified. Zahn himself prints Marcion's text in the hesitant form: τί (or μή) με λέγετε ἀγαθόν; εἷς ἐστὶν ἀγαθός, ὁ (?) θεὸς ὁ πατήρ (?); tells us that it is "variously transmitted"; and suggests that the μή transmitted by Epiphanius may be only a transcriptional error for τί, — unless, he adds, the τί transmitted by Hippolytus is a transcriptional error for μή." We ought not to let it fall out of sight, that there is no evidence for the currency of the phrase "Call me not good," as a reading at Mk. x. 18, Lk. xviii. 19, Mt. xix. 17, earlier than the fourth century, for it seems that the Clementine Homilies should be assigned to that century (cf. Dom Chapman, *ZNTW*, ix. 1908). When Hippolytus ("Refut.," vii. 19) cites this text from a Marcionite book — apparently from Marcion himself — he gives it in the form, *τί με λέγετε ἀγαθόν;* our own inclination is to suppose that the reading *μή με λέγε ἀγαθόν* stood in Marcion's Gospel as it was in circulation in the fourth century, but was not original in it. We are led to this view by the circumstance that in the Clementine Homilies too (where this reading occurs four times; iii. 57, xvii. 4, xviii. 1, 3) it seems to appear (xviii. 1) as a Marcionite reading (Zahn, pp. 469, 483). But it is to be observed that in this understanding of the matter, all appeal to the Clementine Homilies as evidence that this reading was in circulation elsewhere than in Marcionite circles, or earlier than the fourth century, is precluded. Conybeare is as sure that Marcion (he would doubtless extend this to the Marcionites as a body) could not have invented the reading "Call me not good" as that it was read by Marcion. One would think a simple reading of Hippolytus' chapter just referred to ("Refut.," vii. 19) would disabuse anyone's mind of this misjudgment. Whether, however, the reading arose by "doctrinal modification" on the part of the Marcionites or by simple transcriptional error as Zahn supposes, is of little moment. The point of importance is that there is no convincing evidence that such a reading was known earlier than the fourth century and no evidence whatever that it ever had any currency outside (later) Marcionite circles and perhaps among the Arians, to whom it was transmitted by the Clementine Homilies; for this is apparently the significance of the Clementine Homilies in this matter — that they formed the connecting link between Marcionite and Arian. It is meaningless, therefore, when Conybeare remarks: "Marcion's evidence goes back far behind any other," though that remark would be inexplicable in any case. It is probably not Marcion's personal evidence that is in question, but only that of the later Marcionites. And were it his personal evidence that was in question, Justin who quotes the text in the interrogative form was his strict contemporary, Tatian but a little younger contemporary, to say nothing of Marcosians and Naasenes with whom Irenaeus and Hippolytus connect the text in its interrogative form. In any case the total direct transmission of the text of the New Testament is not to be treated with this levity. On the face of it, apart from all citations of as early a date as Marcion, the text as set down in the critical editions of the New Testament is older than Marcion and was already in his day in wide circulation in versions as well as in the original Greek. When we speak in terms of relative originality — instead of in those of mere chronology — there is no room for question here. Any history which may be back of our existent manuscript-text of Mark and Luke in this passage (as indeed of that of Matthew too) is not a textual history but a literary history. What emerges from the ruck of confusion into which Conybeare has gratuitously cast the matter is thus simply that there may have been in circulation in heretical circles in the fourth century a reading in Mk. x. 18 or Luke xviii. 19 which substituted an imperative for the interrogatory form. Needless to say such a fact affords no slightest justification for looking upon this form as "the original" form.

IV

JESUS CHRIST

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The rise of Christianity was a phenomenon of too little apparent significance to attract the attention of the great world. It was only when it had refused to be quenched in the blood of its founder, and, breaking out of the narrow bounds of the obscure province in which it had its origin, was making itself felt in the centers of population, that it drew to itself a somewhat irritated notice. The interest of such heathen writers as mention it was in the movement, not in its author. But in speaking of the movement they tell something of its author, and what they tell is far from being of little moment. He was, it seems, a certain "Christ," who had lived in Judea in the reign of Tiberius (14–37 A.D.), and had been brought to capital punishment by the procurator, Pontius Pilate (q.v.; cf. Tacitus, "Annals," xv. 44). The significance of His personality to the movement inaugurated by Him is already suggested by the fact that He, and no other, had impressed His name upon it. But the name itself by which He was known particularly attracts notice. This is uniformly, in these heathen writers, "Christ," not "Jesus."[2] Suetonius ("Claudius," xxv.) not unnaturally confuses this "Christus" with the Greek name "Chrestus"; but Tacitus and Pliny show themselves better informed and preserve it accurately. "Christ," however, is not a personal name, but the Greek rendering of the Hebrew title "Messiah." Clearly, then, it was as the promised Messiah of the Jews that their founder was reverenced by "the Christians"; and they had made so much of his Messiahship in speaking of Him that the title " Christ " had actually usurped the place of his personal name, and He was everywhere known simply as " Christ." Their reverence for His person had, indeed, exceeded that commonly supposed to be due even to the Messianic dignity. Pliny records that this " Christ " was statedly worshipped by " the Christians " of Pontus and Bithynia as their God (Pliny, " Epist.," xcvi. [xcvii.] to Trajan). Beyond these great facts the heathen historians give little information about the founder of Christianity.

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[1] Article "Jesus Christ" from "The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge," vi. pp. 150–160. Pub. N. Y. & Lond., Funk & Wagnalls Co., [1910].

[2] In Josephus, *Ant.* XVIII., iii. 3, XX., ix. 1, "Jesus," "Jesus, surnamed Christ," occur. But the authenticity of the passages is questionable, especially that of the former.

What is lacking in them is happily supplied, however, by the writings of the Christians themselves. Christianity was from its beginnings a literary religion, and documentary records of it have come down from the very start. There are, for example, the letters of the Apostle Paul (q.v.), a highly cultured Romanized Jew of Tarsus, who early (34 or 35 A.D.) threw in his fortunes with the new religion, and by his splendid leadership established it in the chief centers of influence from Antioch to Rome. Written occasionally to one or another of the Christian communities of this region, at intervals during the sixth and seventh decades of the century, that is to say, from twenty to forty years after the origin of Christianity, these letters reflect the conceptions which ruled in the Christian communities of the time. Paul had known the Christian movement from its beginning; first from the outside, as one of the chief agents in its persecution, and then from the inside, as the most active leader of its propaganda. He was familiarly acquainted with the Apostles and other immediate followers of Jesus, and enjoyed repeated intercourse with them. He explicitly declares the harmony of their teaching with his, and joins with his their testimony to the great facts which he proclaimed. The complete consonance of his allusions to Jesus with what is gathered from the hints of the heathen historians is very striking. The person of Jesus fills the whole horizon of his thought, and gathers to itself all his religious emotions. That Jesus was the Messiah is the presupposition of all his speech of Him, and the Messianic title has already become his proper name behind which His real personal name, Jesus, has retired. This Messiah is definitely represented as a divine being who has entered the world on a mission of mercy to sinful man, in the prosecution of which He has given Himself up as a sacrifice for sin, but has risen again from the dead and ascended to the right hand of God, henceforth to rule as Lord of all. Around the two great facts, of the expiatory death of the Son of God and his rising again, Paul's whole teaching circles. Jesus Christ as crucified, Christ risen from the dead as the first fruits of those that sleep — here is Paul's whole gospel in summary.

Into the details of Christ's earthly life Paul had no occasion to enter. But he shows himself fully familiar with them, and incidentally conveys a vivid portrait of Christ's personality. Of the seed of David on the human, as the Son of God on the divine side, He was born of a woman, under the law, and lived subject to its ordinances for His mission's sake, humbling Himself even unto death, and that the death of the cross. His lowly estate is dwelt upon, and the high traits of His personal character manifested in His lowliness are lightly sketched in, justifying not merely the negative declaration that " He knew no sin," but his positive presentation as the model of all perfection. An item of His teaching is occasionally adverted to, or even quoted, always with the utmost reverence. Members of His immediate circle of followers are mentioned by name or by class — whether His brethren according to the flesh or the twelve apostles whom He appointed. The institution by Him of a sacramental feast is described, and that of a companion sacrament of initiation by baptism is implied. But especially His sacrificial death on the cross is emphasized, His burial, His rising again on the third day, and His appearances to chosen witnesses, who are cited one after the other with the greatest solemnity. Such details are never communicated to Paul's readers as pieces of fresh information. They are alluded to as matters of common knowledge, and with the plainest intimation of the unquestioned recognition of them by all. Thus it is made clear not only that there underlies Paul's letters a complete portrait of Jesus and a full outline of his career, but that this portrait and this outline are the universal possession of

Christians. They were doubtless as fully before his mind as such in the early years of his Christian life, in the thirties, as when he was writing his letters in the fifties and sixties. There is no indication in the way in which Paul touches on these things of a recent change of opinion regarding them or of a recent acquisition of knowledge of them. The testimony of Paul's letters, in a word, has retrospective value, and is contemporary testimony to the facts.

Paul's testimony alone provides thus an exceptionally good basis for the historical verity of Jesus' personality and career. But Paul's testimony is far from standing alone. It is fully supported by the testimony of a series of other writings, similar to his own, purporting to come from the hands of early teachers of the Church, most of them from actual companions of our Lord and eye-witnesses of His majesty, and handed down to us with credible evidence of their authenticity. And it is extended by the testimony of a series of writings of a very different character; not occasional letters designed to meet particular crises or questions arising in the churches, but formal accounts of Jesus' words and acts.

Among these attention is attracted first by a great historical work, the two parts of which bear the titles of " the Gospel according to Luke " and " the Acts of the Apostles." The first contains an account of Jesus' life from His birth to His death and resurrection; or, including the opening paragraphs of the second, to His ascension. What directs attention to it first among books of its class is the uncommonly full information possessed concerning its writer and his method of historical composition. It is the work of an educated Greek physician, known to have enjoyed, as a companion of Paul, special opportunities of informing himself of the facts of Jesus' career. Whatever Paul himself knew of the acts and teachings of his Lord was, of course, the common property of the band of missionaries which traveled in his company, and could not fail to be the subject of much public and private discussion among them. Among Paul's other companions there could not fail to be some whose knowledge of Jesus' life, direct or derived, was considerable; an example is found, for instance, in John Mark, who had come out of the immediate circle of Jesus' first followers, although precise knowledge of the meeting of Luke and Mark as fellow companions of Paul belongs to a little later period than the composition of Luke's Gospel. In company with Paul Luke had even visited Jerusalem and had resided two years at Cæsarea in touch with primitive disciples; and if the early tradition which represents him as a native of Antioch be accepted, he must be credited with facilities from the beginning of his Christian life for association with original disciples of Jesus. All that is needed to ground great confidence in his narrative as a trustworthy account of the facts it records is assurance that he had the will and capacity to make good use of his abounding opportunities for exact information. The former is afforded by the preface to his Gospel in which he reveals his method as a historian and his zeal for exactness of information and statement; the latter by the character of the Gospel, which evinces itself at every point a sincere and careful narrative resting upon good and well-sifted information. In these circumstances the determination of the precise time when this narrative was actually committed to paper becomes a matter of secondary importance; in any event its material was collected during the period of Paul's missionary activity. It may be confidently maintained, however, that it was also put together during this period, that is to say, during the earlier years of the seventh decade of the century. Confidence in its narrative is strengthened by the complete accord of the portrait of Jesus, which its detailed account exhibits with that which underlies the letters of Paul. Not only are the general traits of the personality identical, but the emphasis falls at the same places. In effect, the Jesus of Luke's narrative is the Christ of Paul's epistles in perfect dramatic presentation, and only two hypotheses offer themselves in possible explanation. Either Luke rests on Paul, and has with consummate art invented a historical basis for Paul's ideal Christ; or else Paul's allusions rest on a historical basis and Luke has preserved that historical basis in his careful, detailed narrative. Every line of Luke's narrative refutes the former and demonstrates the latter supposition.

Additional evidence of the trustworthiness of Luke's Gospel as an account of Jesus' acts and teaching is afforded by the presence by its side of other narratives of similar character and accordant contents. These narratives are two in number and have been handed down under the names of members of the earliest circle of Christians — of John Mark, who was from the beginning in the closest touch with the apostolic body, and of Matthew, one of the apostles. On comparison of these narratives with Luke's, not only are they found to present, each with its own peculiar point of view and purpose, precisely the same conception and portrait of Jesus, but to have utilized in large measure also the same sources of information. Indeed, the entire body of Mark's Gospel is found to be incorporated also in Matthew's and Luke's.

This circumstance, in view of the declarations of Luke's preface, is of the utmost significance for an estimate of the trustworthiness of the narrative thus embodied in all three of the "Synoptic" Gospels. In this preface Luke professes to have had for his object the establishment of absolute "certainty," with respect to the things made the object of instruction in Christian circles; and to this end to have grounded his narrative in exact investigation of the course of events from the beginning. In the prosecution of this task, he knew himself to be working in a goodly company to a common end, namely, the narration of the Christian origins on the basis of the testimony of those ministers of the word who had been also "eye-witnesses from the beginning." He does not say whether these fellow narrators had or had not been, some or all of them, eye-witnesses of some or of all the events they narrated; he merely says that the foundation on which all the narratives he has in view rested was the testimony of eye-witnesses. He does not assert for his own treatise superiority to those of his fellow workers; he only claims an honorable place for his own treatise among the others on the ground of the diligence and care he has exercised in ascertaining and recording the facts, through which, he affirms, he has attained a certainty with regard to them on which his readers may depend. Now, on comparing the narrative of Luke with those of Matthew and Mark, it is discovered that one of the main sources on which Luke draws is also one of the main sources on which Matthew draws and practically the sole source on which Mark rests. Thus Luke's judgment of the value and trustworthiness of this source receives the notable support of the judgment of his fellow evangelists, and it can scarcely be doubted that what it contains is the veritable tradition of those who were as well eye-witnesses as ministers of the Word from the beginning, in whose accuracy confidence can be placed. If the three Synoptic Gospels do not give three independent testimonies to the facts which they record, they give what is, perhaps, better, — three independent witnesses to the trustworthiness of the narrative, which they all incorporate into their own as resting on autoptic testimony and thoroughly deserving of credit. A narrative lying at the basis of all three of these Gospels, themselves written certainly not later than the seventh decade of the century, must in any event be early in date, and in that sense must emanate from the first followers of Christ; and in the circumstances — of the large and confident use made of it by all three of these Gospels — cannot fail to be an authentic statement of what was the conviction of the earliest circles of Christians.

By the side of this ancient body of narrative must be placed another equally, or perhaps, even more ancient source, consisting largely, but not exclusively, of reports of "sayings of Jesus." This underlies much of the fabric of Luke and Matthew where Mark fails, and by their employment of it is authenticated as containing, as Luke asserts, the trustworthy testimony of eye-witnesses. Its great antiquity is universally allowed, and there is no doubt that it comes from the very bosom of the Apostolical circle, bearing independent but thoroughly consentient testimony, with the narrative source which underlies all three of the Synoptists, of what was understood by the primitive Christian community to be the facts regarding Jesus. This is the fundamental fact about these two sources — that the Jesus which they present is the same Jesus; and that this Jesus is precisely the same Jesus found in the Synoptic Gospels themselves, presented, moreover, in precisely the same fashion and with the emphases in precisely the same places. This latter could, of course, not fail to be the case since these sources themselves constitute the main substance of the Synoptic Gospels into which they have been transfused. Its significance is that the portrait of Jesus as the supernatural Son of God who came into the world as the Messiah on a mission of mercy to sinful men, which is reflected even in the scanty notices of him that find an incidental place in the pages of heathen historians, which suffused the whole preaching of Paul and of the other missionaries of the first age, and which was wrought out into the details of a rich dramatization in the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels, is as old as Christianity itself and comes straight from the representations of Christ's first followers.

Valuable, however, as the separation out from the Synoptic narrative of these underlying sources is in this aspect of the matter, appeal cannot be made from the Synoptics to these sources as from less to more trustworthy documents. On the one hand, these sources do not exist outside the Synoptics; in them they have " found their grave." On the other hand, the Synoptics in large part are these sources; and their trustworthiness as wholes is guaranteed by the trustworthiness of the sources from which they have drawn the greater part of their materials, and from the general portraiture of Christ in which they do not in the least depart. Luke's claim in his preface that he has made accurate investigations, seeking to learn exactly what happened that he might attain certainty in his narrative, is expressly justified for the larger part of his narrative when the sources which underlie it are isolated and are found to approve themselves under every test as excellent. There is no reason to doubt that for the remainder of his narrative (and Matthew too for the remainder of his narrative) not derived from these two sources which the accident of their common use by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, or by Matthew and Luke, reveals, he (or Matthew) derives his material from equally good and trustworthy sources which happen to be used only by him. The general trustworthiness of Luke's narrative is not lessened but enhanced by the circumstance that, in the larger portion of it, he has the support of other evangelists in his confident use of his sources, with the effect that these sources can be examined and an approving verdict reached upon them. His judgment of sources is thus confirmed, and his claim to possess exact information and to have framed a trustworthy narrative is vindicated. What he gives from sources which were not used by the other evangelists, that is to say, in that portion of his narrative which is peculiar to himself (and the same must be said for Matthew, *mutatis mutandis*), has earned a right to credit on his own authentication. It is not surprising, therefore, that the portions of the narratives of Matthew and Luke which are peculiar to the one or the other bear every mark of sincere and well-informed narration and contain many hints of resting on good and trustworthy sources. In a word, the Synoptic Gospels supply a threefold sketch of the acts and teachings of Christ of exceptional trustworthiness. If here is not historical verity, historical verity would seem incapable of being attained, recorded, and transmitted by human hands.

Along with the Synoptic Gospels there has been handed down by an unexceptionable line of testimony under the name of the Apostle John, another narrative of the teaching and work of Christ of equal fulness with that of the Synoptic Gospels, and yet so independent of theirs as to stand out in a sense in strong contrast with theirs, and even to invite attempts to establish a contradiction between it and them. There is, however, no contradiction, but rather a deep-lying harmony. There are so-called Synoptical traits discoverable in John, and not only are Johannine elements imbedded in the Synoptical narrative, but an occasional passage occurs in it which is almost more Johannine than John himself. Take, for example, that pregnant declaration recorded in Matt. xi. 27–28, which, as it occurs also in Luke (x. 21, 22), must have had a place in that ancient source drawn on in common by these two Gospels which comes from the first days of Christianity. All the high teaching of John's Gospel, as has been justly remarked, is but "a series of variations" upon the theme here given its "classical expression." The type of teaching which is brought forward and emphasized by John is thus recognized on all hands from the beginning to have had a place in Christ's teaching; and John differs from the Synoptics only in the special aspect of Christ's teaching which he elects particularly to present. The naturalness of this type of teaching on the lips of the Jesus of the Synoptists is also undeniable; it must be allowed — and is now generally allowed — that by the writers of the Synoptic Gospels, and, it should be added, by their sources as well, Jesus is presented, and is presented as representing Himself, as being all that John represents Him to be when he calls Him the Word, who was in the beginning with God and was God. The relation of John and the Synoptists in their portraiture of Jesus somewhat resembles, accordingly, that of Plato and Xenophon in their portraiture of Socrates; only, with this great difference — that both Plato and Xenophon were primarily men of letters and the portrait they draw of Socrates is in the hands of both alike eminently a sophisticated and literary one, while the Evangelists set down simply the facts as they appealed to them severally. The definite claim which John's Gospel makes to be the work of one of the inner circle of the companions of Jesus is supported, moreover, by copious evidence that it comes from the hands of such a one as a companion of Jesus would be — a Jew, who possessed an intimate knowledge of Palestine, and was acquainted with the events of our Lord's life as only an eye-witness could be acquainted with them, and an eye-witness who had been admitted to very close association with Him. That its narrative rests on good information is repeatedly manifested; and more than once historical links are supplied by it which are needed to give clearness to the Synoptical narrative, as, for example, in the chronological framework of the ministry of Jesus and the culminating miracle of the raising of Lazarus, which is required to account for the incidents of the Passion-Week. It presents no different Jesus from the Jesus of the Synoptists, and it throws the emphasis at the same place — on His expiatory death and rising again; but it notably supplements the narrative of the Synoptists and reveals a whole new side of Jesus' ministry, and if not a wholly new aspect of His teaching, yet a remarkable mass of that higher aspect of His teaching of which only occasional specimens are included in the Synoptic narrative. John's narrative thus rounds out the Synoptical narrative and gives the portrait drawn in it a richer content and a greater completeness.

This portrait may itself be confidently adduced as its own warranty. It is not too much to say with Nathaniel Lardner that " the history of the New Testament has in it all the marks of credibility that any history can have." But apart from these more usually marshaled evidences of the trustworthiness of the narratives, there is the portrait itself which they draw, and this cannot by any possibility have been an invention. It is not merely that the portrait is harmonious throughout — in the allusions and presuppositions of the Epistles of Paul and the other letter-writers of the New Testament, in the detailed narratives of the Synoptists and John, and in each of the sources which underlie them. This is a matter of importance; but it is not the matter of chief moment; there is no need to dwell upon the impossibility of such a harmony having been maintained save on the basis of simple truthfulness of record, or to dispute whether in the case of the Synoptics there are three independent witnesses to the one portrait, or only the two independent witnesses of their two most prominent " sources." Nor is the most interesting point whether the aboriginality of this portrait is guaranteed by the harmony of the representation in all the sources of information, some of which reach back to the most primitive epoch of the Christian movement. It is quite certain that this conception of Christ's person and career was the conception of his immediate followers, and indeed of himself; but, important as this conclusion is, it is still not the matter of primary import. The matter of primary significance is that this portrait thus imbedded in all the authoritative sources of information, and thus proved to be the conception of its founder cherished by the whole of primitive Christendom, and indeed commended to it by that founder himself, is a portrait intrinsically incapable of invention by men. It could never have come into being save as the revelation of an actual person embodying it, who really lived among men. " A romancer," as even Albert Réville allows, " can not attribute to a being which he creates an ideal superior to what he himself is capable of conceiving." The conception of the God-man which is embodied in the portrait which the sources draw of Christ, and which is dramatized by them through such a history as they depict, can be accounted for only on the assumption that such a God-man actually lived, was seen of men, and was painted from the life. The miracle of the invention of such a portraiture, whether by the conscious effort of art, or by the unconscious working of the mythopeic fancy, would be as great as the actual existence of such a person. Of this there is sufficient *a posteriori* proof in the invariable deterioration this portrait suffers in its secondary reproductions — in the so-called " Lives of Christ," of every type. The attempt vitally to realize and reproduce it results inevitably in its reduction. A portraiture which cannot even be interpreted by men without suffering serious loss cannot be the invention of the first simple followers of Jesus. Its very existence in their unsophisticated narratives is the sufficient proof of its faithfulness to a great reality.

Only an outline of this portrait can be set down here. Jesus appears in it not only a supernatural, but in all the sources alike specifically a divine, person, who came into the world on a mission of mercy to sinful man. Such a mission was in its essence a humiliation and involved humiliation at every step of its accomplishment. His life is represented accordingly as a life of difficulty and conflict, of trial and suffering, issuing in a shameful death. But this humiliation is represented as in every step and stage of it voluntary. It was entered into and abided in solely in the interests of His mission, and did not argue at any point of it helplessness in the face of the difficulties which hemmed Him in more and more until they led Him to death on the cross. It rather manifested His strong determination to fulfil His mission to the end, to drink to its dregs the cup He had undertaken to drink. Accordingly, every suggestion of escape from it by the use of His intrinsic divine powers, whether of omnipotence or of omniscience, was treated by Him first and last as a temptation of the evil one. The death in which His life ends is conceived, therefore, as the goal in which His life culminates. He came into the world to die, and every stage of the road that led up to this issue was determined not for Him but by Him: He was never the victim but always the Master of circumstance, and pursued His pathway from beginning to end, not merely in full knowledge from the start of all its turns and twists up to its bitter conclusion, but in complete control both of them and of it.

His life of humiliation, sinking into His terrible death, was therefore not his misfortune, but His achievement as the promised Messiah, by and in whom the kingdom of God is to be established in the world; it was the work which as Messiah he came to do. Therefore, in his prosecution of it, He from the beginning announced himself as the Messiah, accepted all ascriptions to him of Messiahship under whatever designation, and thus gathered up into His person all the preadumbrations of Old-Testament prophecy; and by His favorite self-designation of " Son of Man," derived from Daniel's great vision (vii. 13), continually proclaimed Himself the Messiah he actually was, emphasizing in contrast with His present humiliation His heavenly origin and His future glory. Moreover, in the midst of His humiliation, He exercised, so far as that was consistent with the performance of his mission, all the prerogatives of that " transcendent " or divine Messiah which He was. He taught with authority, substituting for every other sanction His great " But I say unto you," and declaring Himself greater than the greatest of God's representatives whom He had sent in all the past to visit His people. He surrounded Himself as He went about preaching the Gospel of the kingdom with a miraculous nimbus, each and every miracle in which was adapted not merely to manifest the presence of a supernatural person in the midst of the people, but, as a piece of symbolical teaching, to reveal the nature of this supernatural person, and to afford a foretaste of the blessedness of His rule in the kingdom He came to found. He assumed plenary authority over the religious ordinances of the people, divinely established though they were; and exercised absolute control over the laws of nature themselves. The divine prerogative of forgiving sins he claimed for Himself, the divine power of reading the heart He frankly exercised, the divine function of judge of quick and dead he attached to His own person. Asserting for Himself a superhuman dignity of person, or rather a share in the ineffable Name itself, He represented Himself as abiding continually even when on earth in absolute communion with God the Father, and participating by necessity of nature in the treasures of the divine knowledge and grace; announced Himself the source of all divine knowledge and grace to men; and drew to Himself all the religious affections, suspending the destinies of men absolutely upon their relation to His own person. Nevertheless he walked straight onward in the path of His lowly mission, and, bending even the wrath of men to his service, gave Himself in his own good time and way to the death He had come to accomplish. Then, His mission performed, He rose again from the dead in the power of His deathless life; showed Himself alive to chosen witnesses, that He might strengthen the hearts of His people; and ascended to the right hand of God, whence He directs the continued preparation of the kingdom until it shall please Him to return for its establishment in its glorious eternal form.

It is important to fix firmly in mind the central conception of this representation. It turns upon the sacrificial death of Jesus to which the whole life leads up, and out of which all its issues are drawn, and for a perpetual memorial of which he is represented as having instituted a solemn memorial feast. The divine majesty of this Son of God; His redemptive mission to the world, in a life of humiliation and a ransoming death; the completion of his task in accordance with His purpose; His triumphant rising from the death thus vicariously endured;

His assumption of sovereignty over the future development of the kingdom founded in His blood, and over the world as the theater of its development; His expected return as the consummator of the ages and the judge of all — this is the circle of ideas in which all accounts move. It is the portrait not of a merely human life, though it includes the delineation of a complete and a completely human life. It is the portrayal of a human episode in the divine life. It is, therefore, not merely connected with supernatural occurrences, nor merely colored by supernatural features, nor merely set in a supernatural atmosphere: the supernatural is its very substance, the elimination of which would be the evaporation of the whole. The Jesus of the New Testament is not fundamentally man, however divinely gifted: he is God tabernacling for a while among men, with heaven lying about Him not merely in his infancy, but throughout all the days of His flesh.

The intense supernaturalism of this portraiture is, of course, an offense to our anti-supernaturalistic age. It is only what was to be expected, therefore, that throughout the last century and a half a long series of scholars, imbued with the anti-supernaturalistic instinct of the time, have assumed the task of desupernaturalizing it. Great difficulty has been experienced, however, in the attempt to construct a historical sieve which will strain out miracles and yet let Jesus through; for Jesus is Himself the greatest miracle of them all. Accordingly in the end of the day there is a growing disposition, as if in despair of accomplishing this feat, boldly to construct the sieve so as to strain out Jesus too; to take refuge in the counsel of desperation which affirms that there never was such a person as Jesus, that Christianity had no founder, and that not merely the portrait of Jesus, but Jesus Himself, is a pure projection of later ideals into the past. The main stream of assault still addresses itself, however, to the attempt to eliminate not Jesus Himself, but the Jesus of the Evangelists, and to substitute for Him a desupernaturalized Jesus.

The instruments which have been relied on to effect this result may be called, no doubt with some but not misleading inexactitude, literary and historical criticism. The attempt has been made to track out the process by which the present witnessing documents have come into existence, to show them gathering accretions in this process, and to sift out the sources from which they are drawn; and then to make appeal to these sources as the only real witnesses. And the attempt has been made to go behind the whole written record, operating either immediately upon the documents as they now exist, or ultimately upon the sources which literary criticism has sifted out from them, with a view to reaching a more primitive and presumably truer conception of Jesus than that which has obtained record in the writings of His followers. The occasion for resort to this latter method of research is the failure of the former to secure the results aimed at. For, when, at the dictation of anti-supernaturalistic presuppositions, John is set aside in favor of the Synoptics, and then the Synoptics are set aside in favor of Mark, conceived as the representative of "the narrative source" (by the side of which must be placed — though this is not always remembered — the second source of "Sayings of Jesus," which underlies so much of Matthew and Luke; and also — though this is even more commonly forgotten — whatever other sources either Matthew or Luke has drawn upon for material), it still appears that no progress whatever has been made in eliminating the divine Jesus and His supernatural accompaniment of mighty works — although, chronologically speaking, the very beginning of Christianity has been reached. It is necessary, accordingly, if there is not to be acknowledged a divine Christ with a supernatural history, to get behind the whole literary tradition. Working on Mark, therefore, taken as the original Gospel, an attempt must be made to distinguish between the traditional element which he incorporates into his narrative and the dogmatic element which he (as the mouthpiece of the Christian community) contributes to it. Or, working on the "Sayings," discrimination must first be made between the narrative element (assumed to be colored by the thought of the Christian community) and the reportorial element (which may repeat real sayings of

Jesus); and then, within the reportorial element, all that is too lofty for the naturalistic Jesus must be trimmed down until it fits in with his simply human character. Or, working on the Gospels as they stand, inquisition must be made for statements of fact concerning Jesus or for sayings of his, which, taken out of the context in which the Evangelists have placed them and cleansed from the coloring given by them, may be made to seem inconsistent with "the worship of Jesus" which characterizes these documents; and on the narrower basis thus secured there is built up a new portrait of Jesus, contradictory to that which the Evangelists have drawn.

The precariousness of these proceedings, or rather, frankly, their violence, is glaringly evident. In the processes of such criticism it is pure subjectivity which rules, and the investigator gets out as results only what he puts in as premises. And even when the desired result has thus been wrested from the unwilling documents, he discovers that he has only brought himself into the most extreme historical embarrassment. By thus desupernaturalizing Jesus he leaves primitive Christianity and its supernatural Jesus wholly without historical basis or justification. The naturalizing historian has therefore at once to address himself to supplying some account of the immediate universal ascription to Jesus by his followers of qualities which he did not possess and to which he laid no claim; and that with such force and persistence of conviction as totally to supersede from the very beginning with their perverted version of the facts the actual reality of things. It admits of no doubt, and it is not doubted, that supernaturalistic Christianity is the only historical Christianity. It is agreed on all hands that the very first followers of Jesus ascribed to him a supernatural character. It is even allowed that it is precisely by virtue of its supernaturalistic elements that Christianity has made its way in the world. It is freely admitted that it was by the force of its enthusiastic proclamation of the divine Christ, who could not be holden of death but burst the bonds of the grave, that Christianity conquered the world to itself. What account shall be given of all this? There is presented a problem here, which is insoluble on the naturalistic hypothesis. The old mythical theory fails because it requires time, and no time is at its disposal; the primitive Christian community believed in the divine Christ. The new " history-of-religions " theory fails because it can not discover the elements of that " Christianity before Christ " which it must posit, either remotely in the Babylonian inheritance of the East, or close by in the prevalent Messianic conceptions of contemporary Judaism. Nothing is available but the postulation of pure fanaticism in Jesus' first followers, which finds it convenient not to proceed beyond the general suggestion that there is no telling what fanaticism may not invent. The plain fact is that the supernatural Jesus is needed to account for the supernaturalistic Christianity which is grounded in him. Or — if this supernaturalistic Christianity does not need a supernatural Jesus to account for it, it is hard to see why any Jesus at all need be postulated. Naturalistic criticism thus overreaches itself and is caught up suddenly by the discovery that in abolishing the supernatural Jesus it has abolished Jesus altogether, since this supernatural Jesus is the only Jesus which enters as a factor into the historical development. It is the desupernaturalized Jesus which is the mythical Jesus, who never had any existence, the postulation of the existence of whom explains nothing and leaves the whole historical development hanging in the air.

It is instructive to observe the lines of development of the naturalistic reconstruction of the Jesus of the Evangelists through the century and a half of its evolution. The normal task which the student of the life of Jesus sets himself is to penetrate into the spirit of the transmission so far as that transmission approves itself to him as trustworthy, to realize with exactness and vividness the portrait of Jesus conveyed by it, and to reproduce that portrait in an accurate and vital portrayal. The naturalistic reconstructors, on the other hand, engage themselves in an effort to substitute for the Jesus of the transmission another Jesus of their own, a Jesus who will seem " natural " to them, and will work in " naturally " with their naturalistic world-view. In the first instance it was the miracles of Jesus which they set themselves to eliminate, and this motive ruled their criticism from Reimarus (1694–1768), or rather, from the publication of the Wolfenbuettel Fragments (q.v.), to Strauss (1835–36). The dominant method employed — which found its culminating example in H. E. G. Paulus (1828) — was to treat the narrative as in all essentials historical, but to seek in each miraculous story a natural fact underlying it. This whole point of view was transcended by the advent of the mythical view in Strauss, who laughed it out of court. Since then miracles have been treated ever more and more confidently as negligible quantities, and the whole strength of criticism has been increasingly expended on the reduction of the supernatural figure of Jesus to "natural" proportions. The instrument relied upon to produce this effect has been psychological analysis; the method being to re-work the narrative in the interests of what is called a "comprehensible" Jesus. The whole mental life of Jesus and the entire course of his conduct have been subjected to psychological canons derived from the critics' conception of a purely human life, and nothing has been allowed to him which does not approve itself as "natural" according to this standard. The result is, of course, that the Jesus of the evangelists has been transformed into a nineteenth-century "liberal" theologian, and no conceptions or motives or actions have been allowed to him which would not be "natural" in such a one.

The inevitable reaction which seems to be now asserting itself takes two forms, both of which, while serving themselves heirs to the negative criticism of this "liberal" school, decisively reject its positive construction of the figure of Jesus. A weaker current contents itself with drawing attention to the obvious fact that such a Jesus as the "liberal" criticism yields will not account for the Christianity which actually came into being; and on this ground proclaims the "liberal" criticism bankrupt and raises the question, what need there is for assuming any Jesus at all. If the only Jesus salvable from the débris of legend is obviously not the author of the Christianity which actually came into being, why not simply recognize that Christianity came into being without any author — was just the crystallization of conceptions in solution at the time? A stronger current, scoffing at the projection of a nineteenth-century " liberal " back into the first century and calling him " Jesus," insists that " the historical Jesus " was just a Jew of his day, a peasant of Galilee with all the narrowness of a peasant's outlook and all the deficiency in culture which belonged to a Galilean countryman of the period. Above all, it insists that the real Jesus, possessed by those Messianic dreams which filled the minds of the Jewish peasantry of the time, was afflicted with the great delusion that He was Himself the promised Messiah. Under the obsession of this portentous fancy He imagined that God would intervene with His almighty arm and set him on the throne of a conquering Israel; and when the event falsified this wild hope, he assuaged his bitter disappointment with the wilder promise that he would rise from death itself and come back to establish his kingdom. Thus the naturalistic criticism of a hundred and fifty years has run out into no Jesus at all, or worse than no Jesus, a fanatic or even a paranoiac. The " liberal " criticism which has had it so long its own way is called sharply to its defense against the fruit of its own loins. In the process of this defense it wavers before the assault and incorporates more or less of the new conception of Jesus — of the " consistently eschatological " Jesus — into its fabric. Or it stands in its tracks and weakly protests that Jesus' figure must be conceived as greatly as possible, so only it be kept strictly within the limits of a mere human being. Or it develops an apologetical argument which, given its full validity and effect, would undo all its painfully worked-out negative results and lead back to the Jesus of the evangelists as the true " historical Jesus."

It has been remarked above that the portrait of Jesus drawn in the sources is its own credential; no man, and no body of men, can have invented this figure, consciously or unconsciously, and dramatized it consistently through such a varied and difficult life-history. It may be added that the Jesus of the naturalistic criticism is its own refutation. One wonders whether the " liberal " critics realize the weakness, ineffectiveness, inanition of the Jesus they offer; the pitiful inertness they attribute to him, his utter passivity under the impact of circumstance. So far from being conceivable as the molder of the ages, this Jesus is wholly molded by his own surroundings, the sport of every suggestion from without. In their preoccupation with critical details, it is possible that its authors are scarcely aware of the grossness of the reduction of the figure of Jesus they have perpetrated. But let them only turn to portray their new Jesus in a life-history, and the pitiableness of the figure they have made him smites the eye. Whatever else may be said of it, this must be said — that out of the Jesus into which the naturalistic criticism has issued — in its best or in its worst estate — the Christianity which has conquered the world could never have come.

The firmness, clearness, and even fulness with which the figure of Jesus is delineated in the sources, and the variety of activities through which it is dramatized, do not insure that the data given should suffice for drawing up a properly so-called " life of Jesus." The data in the sources are practically confined to the brief period of Jesus' public work. Only a single incident is recorded from His earlier life, and that is taken from His boyhood. So large a portion of the actual narrative, moreover, is occupied with His death that it might even be said — the more that the whole narrative also leads up to the death as the life's culmination — that little has been preserved concerning Jesus but the circumstances which accompanied His birth and the circumstances which led up to and accompanied His death. The incidents which the narrators record, again, are not recorded with a biographical intent, and are not selected for their biographical significance, or ordered so as to present a biographical result: in the case of each Evangelist they serve a particular purpose which may employ biographical details, but is not itself a biographical end. In other words the Gospels are not formal biographies but biographical arguments — a circumstance which does not affect the historicity of the incidents they select for record, but does affect the selection and ordering of these incidents. Mark has in view to show that this great religious movement in which he himself had a part had its beginnings in a divine interposition; Matthew, that this divine interposition was in fulfilment of the promises made to Israel; Luke, that it had as its end the redemption of the world; John, that the agent in it was none other than the Son of God himself. In the enforcement and illustration of their several themes each records a wealth of biographical details. But it does not follow that these details, when brought together and arranged in their chronological sequence, or even in their genetic order, will supply an adequate biography. The attempt to work them up into a biography is met, moreover, by a great initial difficulty. Every biographer takes his position, as it were, above his subject, who must live his life over again in his biographer's mind; it is of the very essence of the biographer's work thoroughly to understand his subject and to depict him as he understands him. What, then, if the subject of the biography be above the comprehension of his biographer? Obviously, in that case, a certain reduction can scarcely be avoided. This in an instance like the present, where the subject is a superhuman being, is the same as to say that a greater or lesser measure of rationalization, " naturalization," inevitably takes place. A true biography of a God-man, a biography which depicts His life from within, untangling the complex of motives which moved Him, and explaining His conduct by reference to the internal springs of action, is in the nature of the case an impossibility for men. Human beings can explain only on the basis of their own experiences and mental processes; and so explaining they instinctively explain away what transcends their experiences and confounds their mental processes. Seeking to portray the life of Jesus as natural, they naturalize it, that is, reduce it to correspondence with their own nature. Every attempt to work out a life of Christ must therefore face not only the insufficiency of the data, but the perennial danger of falsifying the data by an instinctive naturalization of them. If, however, the expectation of attaining a " psychological " biography of Jesus must be renounced, and even a complete external life can not be pieced together from the fragmentary communications of the sources, a clear and consistent view of the course of the public ministry of Jesus can still be derived from them. The consecution of the events can be set forth, their causal relations established, and their historical development explicated. To do this is certainly in a modified sense to outline "the life of Jesus," and to do this proves by its results to be eminently worth while.

A series of synchronisms with secular history indicated by Luke, whose historical interest seems more alert than that of the other evangelists, gives the needed information for placing such a "life" in its right historical relations. The chronological framework for the "life" itself is supplied by the succession of annual feasts which are recorded by John as occurring during Jesus' public ministry. Into this framework the data furnished by the other Gospels — which are not without corroborative suggestions of order, season of occurrence, and relations — fit readily; and when so arranged yield so self-consistent and rationally developing a history as to add a strong corroboration of its trustworthiness. Differences of opinion respecting the details of arrangement of course remain possible; and these differences are not always small and not always without historical significance. But they do not affect the general outline or the main drift of the history, and on most points, even those of minor importance, a tolerable agreement exists. Thus, for example, it is all but universally allowed that Jesus was born c. 5 or 6 B.C. (year of Rome 748 or 749), and it is an erratic judgment indeed which would fix on any other year than 29 or 30 A.D. for his crucifixion. On the date of His baptism — which determines the duration of his public ministry — more difference is possible; but it is quite generally agreed that it took place late in 26 A.D. or early in 27. It is only by excluding the testimony of John that a duration of less than between two and three years can be assigned to the public ministry; and then only by subjecting the Synoptical narrative to considerable pressure. The probabilities seem strongly in favor of extending it to three years and some months. The decision between a duration of two years and some months and a duration of three years and some months depends on the determination of the two questions of where in the narrative of John the imprisonment of John the Baptist (Mt. iv. 12) is to be placed, and what the unnamed feast is which is mentioned in John v. 1. On the former of these questions opinion varies only between John iv. 1–3 and John v. 1. On the latter a great variety of opinions exists: some think of Passover, others of Purim or Pentecost, or of Trumpets or Tabernacles, or even of the day of Atonement. On the whole, the evidence seems decisively preponderant for placing the imprisonment of the Baptist at John iv. 1–3, and for identifying the feast of John v. 1 with Passover. In that case, the public ministry of Jesus covered about three years and a third, and it is probably not far wrong to assign to it the period lying between the latter part of 26 A.D. and the Passover of 30 A.D.[3]

The material supplied by the Gospel narrative distributes itself naturally under the heads of (1) the preparation (2) the ministry, and (3) the consummation. For the first twelve or thirteen years of Jesus' life nothing is recorded except the striking circumstances connected with His birth, and a general statement of His remarkable growth. Similarly for His youth, about seventeen years and a half, there is recorded only the single incident, at its beginning, of His conversation with the doctors in the temple. Anything like continuous narrative begins only with the public ministry, in, say, December, 26 A.D. This narrative falls naturally into four parts which may perhaps be distinguished as (a) the beginning of the Gospel, forty days, from December, 26 to February, 27; (b) the Judean ministry, covering about ten months, from February, 27 to December, 27; (c) the Galilean ministry, covering about twenty-two months, from December, 27 to September, 29;

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[3] Ramsay, Sanday, and Turner prefer 29 A.D. for the date of the crucifixion. Turner's dates are: birth, 7–6 B.C.; baptism, 26 A.D.; ministry, between two and three years; death, 29 A.D. Sanday's dates are: birth —; baptism, late 26 A.D.; ministry, two and a half years; death, 29 A.D. Ramsay's dates are: birth, autumn, 6 B.C.; baptism, early in 26 A.D.; ministry, three years and some months; death, 29 A.D.

(d) the last journeys to Jerusalem, covering some six months, from September, 29 to the Passover of (April) 30. The events of this final Passover season, the narrative of which becomes so detailed and precise that the occurrences from day to day are noted, constitute, along with their sequences, what is here called "the consummation." They include the events which led up to the crucifixion of Jesus, the crucifixion itself, and the manifestations which He gave of Himself after His death up to His ascension. So preponderating was the interest which the reporters took in this portion of the "life of Christ," that is to say, in His death and resurrection, that about a third of their whole narrative is devoted to it. The ministry which leads up to it is also, however, full of incident. What is here called "the beginning of the Gospel" gives, no doubt, only the accounts of Jesus' baptism and temptation. Only meager information is given also, and that by John alone, of the occurrences of the first ten months after His public appearance, the scene of which lay mainly in Judea. With the beginning of the ministry in Galilee, however, with which alone the Synoptic Gospels concern themselves, incidents become numerous. Capernaum now becomes Jesus' home for almost two full years; and no less than eight periods of sojourn there with intervening circuits going out from it as a center can be traced. When the object of this ministry had been accomplished Jesus finally withdraws from Galilee and addresses Himself to the preparation of his followers for the death He had come into the world to accomplish; and this He then brings about in the manner which best subserves His purpose.

Into the substance of Jesus' ministry it is not possible to enter here. Let it only be observed that it is properly called a ministry. He Himself testified that He came not to be ministered unto but to minister, and He added that this ministry was fulfilled in His giving His life as a ransom for many. In other words, the main object of His work was to lay the foundations of the kingdom of God in His blood. Subsidiary to this was His purpose to make vitally known to men the true nature of the kingdom of God, to prepare the way for its advent in their hearts, and above all, to attach them by faith to His person as the founder and consummator of the kingdom. His ministry involved, therefore, a constant presentation of Himself to the people as the promised One, in and by whom the kingdom of God was to be established, a steady " campaign of instruction " as to the nature of the kingdom which He came to found, and a watchful control of the forces which were making for His destruction, until, His work of preparation being ended, He was ready to complete it by offering Himself up. The progress of His ministry is governed by the interplay of these motives. It has been broadly distributed into a year of obscurity, a year of popular favor, and a year of opposition; and if these designations are understood to have only a relative applicability, they may be accepted as generally describing from the outside the development of the ministry. Beginning first in Judea Jesus spent some ten months in attaching to Himself His first disciples, and with apparent fruitlessness proclaiming the kingdom at the center of national life. Then, moving north to Galilee, He quickly won the ear of the people and carried them to the height of their present receptivity; whereupon, breaking from them, He devoted Himself to the more precise instruction of the chosen band He had gathered about Him to be the nucleus of His Church. The Galilean ministry thus divides into two parts, marked respectively by more popular and more intimate teaching. The line of division falls at the miracle of the feeding of the five thousand, which, as marking a crisis in the ministry, is recorded by all four Evangelists, and is the only miracle which has received this fourfold record. Prior to this point, Jesus' work had been one of gathering disciples; subsequently to it, it was a work of instructing and sifting the disciples whom He had gathered. The end of the Galilean ministry is marked by the confession of Peter and the transfiguration, and after it nothing remained but the preparation of the chosen disciples for the death, which was to close His work; and the consummation of His mission in His death and rising again.

The instruments by which Jesus carried out his ministry were two, teaching and miracles. In both alike He manifested His deity. Wherever He went the supernatural was present in word and deed. His teaching was with authority. In its insight and foresight it was as supernatural as the miracles themselves; the hearts of men and the future lay as open before Him as the forces of nature lay under His control; all that the Father knows He knew also, and He alone was the channel of the revelation of it to men. The power of His "But I say unto you" was as manifest as that of His compelling "Arise and walk." The theme of His teaching was the kingdom of God and Himself as its divine founder and king. Its form ran all the way from crisp gnomic sayings and brief comparisons to elaborate parables and profound spiritual discussions in which the deep things of God are laid bare in simple, searching words. The purport of His miracles was that the kingdom of God was already present in its King. Their number is perhaps usually greatly underestimated. It is true that only about thirty or forty are actually recorded. But these are recorded only as specimens, and as such they represent all classes. Miracles of healing form the preponderant class; but there are also exorcisms, nature-miracles, raisings of the dead. Besides these recorded miracles, however, there are frequent general statements of abounding miraculous manifestations. For a time disease and death must have been almost banished from the land. The country was thoroughly aroused and filled with wonder. In the midst of this universal excitement — when the people were ready to take Him by force and make Him King — He withdrew Himself from them, and throwing His circuits far afield, beyond the bruit and uproar, addressed Himself to preparing His chosen companions for His great sacrifice — first leading them in the so-called "later Galilean ministry" (from the feeding of the 5,000 to the confession at Cæsarea Philippi) to a better apprehension of the majesty of His person as the Son of God, and of the character of the kingdom He came to found, as consisting not in meat and drink but in righteousness; and then, in the so-called "Peræan ministry" (from the confession at Cæsarea Philippi to the final arrival at Jerusalem) specifically preparing them for His death and resurrection. Thus He walked straightforward in the path He had chosen, and His choice of which is already made clear in the account of His temptation, set at the beginning of His public career; and in His own good time and way — in the end forcing the hand of His opponents to secure that he should die at the Passover — shed His blood as the blood of the new covenant sacrifice for the remission of sins. Having power thus to lay down His life, He had power also to take it again, and in due time He rose again from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the majesty on high, leaving behind Him His promise to come again in His glory, to perfect the kingdom He had inaugurated.

It is appropriate that this miraculous life should be set between the great marvels of the virgin-birth and the resurrection and ascension. These can appear strange only when the intervening life is looked upon as that of a merely human being, endowed, no doubt, not only with unusual qualities, but also with the unusual favor of God, yet after all nothing more than human and therefore presumably entering the world like other human beings, and at the end paying the universal debt of human nature. From the standpoint of the evangelical writers, and of the entirety of primitive Christianity, which looked upon Jesus not as a merely human being but as God himself come into the world on a mission of mercy that involved the humiliation of a human life and death, it would be this assumed community with common humanity in mode of entrance into and exit from the earthly life which would seem strange and incredible. The entrance of the Lord of Glory into the world could not but be supernatural; His exit from the world, after the work which He had undertaken had been performed, could not fail to bear the stamp of triumph. There is no reason for doubting the trustworthiness of the narratives at these points, beyond the anti-supernaturalistic instinct which strives consciously or unconsciously to naturalize the whole evangelical narrative. The " infancy chapters " of Luke are demonstrably from Luke's own hand, bear evident traces of having been derived from trustworthy sources of information, and possess all the authority which attaches to the communications of a historian who evinces himself sober, careful, and exact, by every historical test. The parallel chapters of Matthew, while obviously independent of those of Luke — recording in common with them not a single incident beyond the bare fact of the virgin-birth — are thoroughly at one with them in the main fact, and in the incidents they record fit with remarkable completeness into the interstices of Luke's narrative. Similarly, the narratives of the resurrection, full of diversity in details as they are, and raising repeated puzzling questions of order and arrangement, yet not only bear consentient testimony to all the main facts, but fit into one another so as to create a consistent narrative — which has moreover the support of the contemporary testimony of Paul. The persistent attempts to explain away the facts so witnessed or to substitute for the account which the New Testament writers give of them some more plausible explanation, as the naturalistic mind estimates plausibility, are all wrecked on the directness, precision, and copiousness of the testimony; and on the great effects which have flowed from this fact in the revolution wrought in the minds and lives of the apostles themselves, and in the revolution wrought through their preaching of the resurrection in the life and history of the world. The entire history of the world for 2,000 years is the warranty of the reality of the resurrection of Christ, by which the forces were let loose which have created it. " Unique spiritual effects," it has been remarked, with great reasonableness, " require a unique spiritual cause; and we shall never understand the full significance of the cause, if we begin by denying or minimizing its uniqueness."

V

CONCERNING SCHMIEDEL'S "PILLAR-PASSAGES"

CONCERNING SCHMIEDEL'S "PILLAR-PASSAGES"[1]

THE publication by Paul W. Schmiedel in 1901 of the article "Gospels" in the "Encyclopaedia Biblica" marks (we do not say, creates) something very much like an epoch in the history of the criticism of the Gospel-narratives. For more than a century — "from Reimarus to Wrede" — "the quest of the historical Jesus" has been pursued with unflagging industry. That is to say, the energies of a long line of brilliantly endowed scholars, equipped with the instrument of the most extensive and exact erudition, have been exhausted in the effort to discover some historical basis for the "natural" Jesus which their philosophical presuppositions compelled them to assume behind the supernatural Jesus presented in the Gospel-narratives. "Exhausted" is the right word to use here. For precisely what Schmiedel's article advises us of, is the failure of this long-continued and diligently prosecuted labor to reach the results expected of it. After a half-century of somewhat unmethodical investigation, Ferdinand Christian Baur, in the middle of the last century, laid down the reasonable rule by which subsequent research has been governed: "criticism of documents must precede criticism of material."[2] But the subsequent half-century of criticism of documents has issued in certainly nothing to the purpose, and, Schmiedel seems half-inclined to declare, nothing solid at all. The Synoptic problem, he tells us, remains as vexed at the end of it as it was at the beginning. Certain immediate sources of the Synoptics' material it is, of course, easy enough to discern lying behind them, and these are very generally recognized. But behind them in turn stretches a vista of sources, traveling down which the eye becomes weary; and the complications which result when an attempt is made to take these into consideration confound the most promising hypotheses. "The solution of the synoptical problem which appeared after so much toil to have been brought so near," remarks Schmiedel, "seems suddenly to be removed again to an immeasurable distance."[3] "It cannot but seem unfortunate" therefore, he continues, "that the decision as to the credibility of the gospel narratives should be made to depend upon the determination of a problem so difficult and perhaps insoluble as the synoptical is."[4] Consequently he proposes a return to the pre-Tübingen position of criticism of the material independently of the criticism of the documents in which this material is presented. "It would accordingly be a very important gain," he says, "if we could find some means of making" the decision as to the credibility of the Gospel-narratives "in some measure at least independent of" the determination of the Synoptical problem.[5]

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[1] From *The Princeton Theological Review*, xi. 1913, pp. 195–269.

[2] F. C. Baur, "Kritische Untersuchungen über die kanonischen Evangelien," 1847, Introduction. Strauss had proceeded on the principle that a history which contains narratives of miracles can deserve no credit. Baur raises the question whether this is not a rash conclusion; whether the metaphysical notion of the miraculous is not too abstract a category to be made the test of the entire evangelical history; whether, in a word, some investigation into the origin of the narratives is not called for before a conclusion is drawn against their contents; and whether, therefore, Strauss has not erred in making his criticism so exclusively a criticism of the history to the neglect of criticism of the writings (p. 46). He recognizes a certain naturalness in Strauss' procedure in the state of the documentary criticism of the day. But he con-

The procedure which Schmiedel here proposes is obviously

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cludes: "The fault of the Straussian work is that it makes the Gospel history the object of criticism without first attaining a solid result with the criticism of the writings" (p. 71). "However natural and in a sense unavoidable the way opened up by Strauss may be, it nevertheless remains undeniable that it is from the very nature of the case impossible to reach an assured result with the criticism of the history, so long as the criticism of the writings is so wavering and uncertain" (p. 72). Cf. Otto Pfleiderer, "The Development of Theology in Germany since Kant," 1890, pp. 224 ff.

[3] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1868.

[4] *Ibid.*, col. 1872.

[5] *Ibid.*, col. 1872; cf. *Protestantische Monatshefte*, x. (1906) p. 400: "They [his 'pillar-passages'] provide the possibility of establishing very essential traits of the life of Jesus without the question of the origin and the mutual relations of the first three Gospels having to be solved."

revolutionary; so revolutionary that it marks, as we say, something very like an epoch in the history of the criticism of the Gospel-narratives. It is an express return to the methods of Strauss as opposed to the more scientific methods validated once for all by Baur as against Strauss; and in returning to Strauss' methods it returns in a very curious way to Strauss' exact standpoint of unreasoned scepticism with respect to the Gospel-narratives. What it particularly concerns us here to emphasize, however, is that it registers the failure of "literary criticism" of the Gospels as prosecuted during the last half-century, either, as Schmiedel intimates, to accomplish anything of importance, or, in any event, to accomplish anything to the purpose. There are many, no doubt, who will disown Schmiedel's low estimate of the formal results of Synoptical criticism. But no well-informed person will care to deny that for the ultimate purpose for which this criticism has been invoked its failure has been complete. No stratum of tradition has been reached by it in which the portrait of Jesus differs in any essential respect from that presented in the Synoptic Gospels. If the writers of the Synoptic Gospels were (in Schmiedel's phrase)[6] "worshippers of Jesus," no less were those who formed and transmitted to them the tradition on which they ultimately rest (also in Schmiedel's phrase)[7] "worshippers of Jesus." As we go back, and ever farther back, to the very beginnings of any tradition to which literary criticism can penetrate, the purely human Jesus who is assumed to lie behind the Jesus of the

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[6] This is the term employed in the English of the "Encyclopaedia Biblica" (e.g. col. 1872), the Preface which Schmiedel contributed to Arno Neumann's "Jesus" (e.g. pp. ix, xviii; here, as elsewhere, the E. T. is referred to), and his lecture on "Jesus in Modern Criticism" (e.g. p. 16) alike; and as all these discussions owe their English clothing to friends of Schmiedel, working under his eye, we should perhaps permit the term to stand. The German term which is rendered (*Verehrung, Verehrer*) we should not suppose necessarily expressed so specific a notion.

[7] Preface to Neumann, p. ix: "The Gospels are, all of them, the work of worshippers of Jesus, and their contents have been handed down through the channel of tradition in like manner by His worshippers"; p. xviii: "This tradition was itself really handed down by worshippers of Jesus." So also W. Heitmüller, in Schiele and Zscharnack's "Die Religion," etc., iii. coll, 357–359.

Gospels still continually eludes us. Accordingly a Pfleiderer frankly despairs of ever recovering Him,[8] and a Wellhausen leaves on his readers a strong impression that his drastic criticism must land us ultimately in the same desperation.[9] Schmiedel's counsel is, in these circumstances, to reverse the established method of the last half-century, and, abandoning the criticism of documents which no longer seems hopeful, to seek to break a way to the assumed purely human Jesus by means of immediate criticism of the historical material itself. And he thinks he can blaze out the road directly to the desired goal.

It ought to be noted in passing that Schmiedel sometimes speaks as if he were not prepared to admit that the attainment of the purely human Jesus, so long sought in vain by literary criticism, were the determining motive of the change of procedure which he suggests.[10] He everywhere speaks, indeed, as if the critical principle which he invokes were quite indifferent to this issue. He even asserts explicitly: "In reality, my foundation-texts were in no sense sought out by me for any purpose whatever; they thrust themselves upon me in virtue of one feature, and one feature only: the impossibility of their having been invented, and their consequent credibility."[11] Except in a purely formal sense, however, this is manifestly absurd. It is its superhuman Jesus with His nimbus of the supernatural which is the sole *skandalon* of the Synoptic narrative, apart from which that narrative would be acknowledged by all as exceptionally trustworthy. "Precisely this," remarks Albert Schweitzer justly, "is the characteristic of the literature of the Life of Jesus at the opening of the twentieth century, — that the purely historical, even in the productions of historical, scientific, professional theology, retires behind the interest

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[8] Cf. *The Princeton Theological Review*, iv. (1906) pp. 121–124.

[9] Cf. H. Weinel, "Ist das 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, p. 20: "And even now if Wrede and Wellhausen do not really mean that Jesus is a wholly imaginary figure, yet the judgment to which their work leads runs: 'Jesus is for us unknowable (*unerkennbar*).'"

[10] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881.

[11] Preface to Neumann, p. xxi.

in the world-view."[12] Schmiedel does not separate from his companions in this. He comes to the criticism of the Gospel-narratives with a definite world-view as the primary presupposition of his work; and this world-view is the current anti-supernaturalistic one. There is nothing of which he is surer than that Jesus was merely a man;[13] unless it be that miracles in general do not happen.[14] The only reason why he rejects out of hand the Jesus given him by the Synoptic narratives is that the Jesus given him by the Synoptic narratives is not a mere man. And the precise thing he sets himself to look for behind the Synoptic narratives is evidence of some kind that the real Jesus was, despite the constant testimony of the tradition, nevertheless merely man. "What," he asks, "are the portions of the Gospels which are so persistently objected to?" And he replies: "We find that they are, to say all in a word, those in which Jesus appears as a Divine Being whether in virtue of what He says or in virtue of what He does."[15] There is no other reason why the portrait of Jesus given by the Synoptics should be "objected to." And so firmly set is Schmiedel's reluctance to the admission of the possibility of such a Jesus that he even goes the length of declaring that were this representation consistent and unbroken, he, for his part, might find it impossible to defend the actual existence of any Jesus at all.[16] Either a purely human Jesus or no Jesus at all is the only alternative that he will admit, prior to entering into any critical inquiry into the evidence; and the sole object of his criticism is to discover some evidence of the existence of a purely human Jesus. The precise significance of his proposed revolution in critical procedure, therefore, is that it openly recognizes that literary criticism has failed to discover any evidence of the existence of a purely human Jesus behind the superhuman Jesus of the Synoptic narratives, and suggests that another and more direct way be therefore tried to reach the desired end.

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[12] "Quest of the Historical Jesus."

[13] *Hibbert Journal* Supplement: *Jesus or Christ?* 1909, p. 66 f.: "Since the divine and human nature cannot be united in Jesus, and since Jesus was undoubtedly man, we have simply to regard his human nature as given. . . ." "Jesus in Modern Criticism," 1907, p. 86: "My religion, moreover, does not require me to find in Jesus an *absolutely perfect* model, and it would not trouble me if I found another person who excelled him, as indeed, in certain respects some have already done. Convinced as I am that he was human, if another should have more to offer me than he had, I should consider this simply another instance of God's bounty and favour." *Ibid.,* p. 6: "It is no less pleasant to note at the same time that the person of Jesus is being explained in a more and more definitely human way by all theological parties, and in a more or less human way even by ultra-conservatives." Cf. "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881; "Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 24.

[14] "It would clearly be wrong," he indeed declares ("Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1876), "in an investigation such as the present, to start from any such postulate or axiom as that 'miracles' are impossible"; but he is soon found arguing that "even one strongly predisposed to believe in miracles would find it difficult to accept a narrative" like that of Lk. xxiii. 44 ff. because it alleges a darkening of the sun at a time of the month when eclipses do not happen — that is because if it happened at all it must have been by miracle.

[15] Preface to Neumann, p. ix.

Schmiedel's criticism brings us, then, to a parting of the ways. Not only are we justified, therefore, in giving it an attention which in itself it might not seem to merit, but it is in a sense required of us to subject it to a sufficiently careful scrutiny to assure us that we understand exactly what he proposes, and also, if possible, exactly what the significance of this proposal is.

So far as we are informed, Schmiedel, after a brief incidental suggestion of it in the course of an article in the *Protestantische Monatshefte,* first propounded his new critical method at some length in the article "Gospels" which was published in the second volume of the "Encyclopaedia Biblica" in 1901. The commendation of it to a German public seems in the first instance to have been made by expositions of it given by his brother, Otto Schmiedel, in 1902[17] and by his pupil, Arno Neumann, in 1904.[18] It was apparently not until 1906 that Schmiedel himself laid it at length before his countrymen, early in that year somewhat incidentally in a tractate on the Gospel of John as compared with the Synoptics,[19] and later more at length in a lecture on the Person of Jesus in modern controversy, which was delivered at the meeting of the Swiss Association for Free Christianity on June 15, 1906, and published in the July number of the *Protestantische Monatshefte,* and afterwards separately.[20] In the same year he returned to its exposition and defence in English in a preface which he wrote for the English translation of Neumann's "Jesus"; [21] and in the following year there was issued an English translation of his Swiss lecture.[22] These publications constitute our sources of information with respect to the proposal we are to examine.[23]

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[16] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881: "If passages of this kind were wholly wanting in them it would be impossible to prove to a sceptic that any historical value whatever was to be assigned to the gospels; he would be in a position to declare the picture of Jesus contained in them to be purely a work of phantasy, and could remove the person of Jesus from the field of history. . . ."

[17] "Die Hauptprobleme der Leben Jesu Forschung," von Otto Schmiedel, 1902, § vi, pp. 39–41. The second edition, 1906, repeats this section without change, pp. 46–48.

In its primary publication [24] Schmiedel explains his suggestion, if succinctly, yet with sufficient clearness. Turning from literary to historical criticism, the investigator finds, he remarks, two lines of procedure open to him — a negative and a positive one. He must on the one hand, "set on one side everything which for any reason arising either from the substance or from considerations of literary criticism has to be regarded as doubtful or wrong." On the other hand, "one must make search for all such data, as from the nature of their contents cannot possibly on any account be regarded as inventions." Following out the former of these lines of inquiry with respect to the Synoptic Gospels Schmiedel points out a number of matters (including their accounts of miraculous occurrences) in which he considers them clearly untrustworthy.[25] With this negative criticism we are not for the moment concerned. We only note in passing that it is sufficiently drastic to lead Schmiedel to remark at the close of the sections devoted to it, "The foregoing sections may have sometimes seemed to raise a doubt whether any credible elements were to to be found in the Gospels at all." [26] The method of the positive investigation is outlined as follows: [27]

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[18] "Jesus, wer er geschichtlich war," von Arno Neumann, 1904, "Die Vorfrage," § 5, pp. 16–18. E. T.: "Jesus," 1906, pp. 9–11.

[19] "Das vierte Evangelium gegenüber den drei ersten," von Professor D. P. W. Schmiedel, Zürich, being the 8th and 10th parts of the first series of the well-known "Religionsgeschichtliche Volksbücher," 1906, pp. 16–22, 31 f., 33, 81–83, 85–87.

[20] *Protestantische Monatshefte,* x. (1906) 7, pp. 257–282. "Die Person Jesu im Streite der Meinungen der Gegenwart," Vortrag . . . von D. Paul Wilh. Schmiedel . . . Leipzig, 1906.

[21] "Jesus." By Arno Neumann. Translated by Maurice A. Canney, M.A. With a Preface by Professor P. W. Schmiedel, London: Adam and Charles Black, 1906. The Preface occupies pp. v.–xxviii.

[22] "Jesus in Modern Criticism." A lecture by Dr. Paul W. Schmiedel, Professor of Theology in Zurich. Translated into English (by permission of the publishers of the *Prot. Monatshefte*) by Maurice A. Canney, M.A. London: Adam and Charles Black, 1907.

[23] A "Nachwort über die 'Grundsäulen' eines Lebens Jesu" in reply to an article in the same number (pp. 386–392) by Eduard Hertlein of Jena, entitled, "Neue 'Grundsäulen' eines 'Lebens Jesu'?" was published by Schmiedel in the number of the *Protestantische Monatshefte* for Nov. 1906 (x. 10, pp. 393–400).

[24] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," coll. 1872 ff.

> "When a profane historian finds before him a historical document which testifies to the worship of a hero unknown to other sources, he attaches first and foremost importance to those features which cannot be deduced merely from the fact of this worship, and he does so on the simple and sufficient ground that they would not be found in this source unless the author had met with them as fixed data of tradition. The same fundamental principle may safely be applied in the case of the gospels, for they also are all of them written by worshippers of Jesus. We now have accordingly the advantage — which cannot be appreciated too highly — of being in a position to recognise something as being worthy of belief even without being able to say, or even being called on to inquire, whether it comes from original Mk., from logia, from oral tradition, or from any other quarter that may be alleged. The relative priority becomes a matter of indifference, because the absolute priority — that is, the origin in real tradition — is certain. In such points the question as to credibility becomes independent of the synoptical question. Here the clearest cases are those in which only one evangelist, or two, have data of this class, and the second, or third, or both, are found to have taken occasion to alter these in the interests of the reverence due to Jesus.

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[25] *Ibid.,* coll. 1873–1880. [26] *Ibid.,* col. 1881. [27] *Ibid.,* col. 1872.

"If we discover any such points — even if only a few — they guarantee not only their own contents, but also much more. For in that case one may also hold as credible all else which agrees in character with these, and is in other respects not open to suspicion. Indeed the thoroughly disinterested historian must recognise it as his duty to investigate the grounds for this so great reverence for himself which Jesus was able to call forth; and he will then, first and foremost, find himself led to recognise as true the two great facts that Jesus had compassion for the multitude and that he preached with power, not as the scribes (Mt. ix. 36; vii. 29)." [28]

Proceeding after this fashion Schmiedel fixes primarily on five passages which seem to him to meet the conditions laid down; that is to say, they make statements which are in conflict with the reverence for Jesus that pervades the Gospels and therefore could not have been invented by the authors of the Gospels, but must have come to them from earlier fixed tradition; and they are preserved in their crude contradiction with the standpoint of the evangelists, accordingly, only by one or two of them, while the others, or other, of them, if they report them at all, modify them into harmony with their standpoint of reverence.[29] These five passages are: Mk. x, 17 ff. ("Why callest thou me good? None is good save God only"); Mt. xii. 31 ff. (blasphemy against the Son of Man can be forgiven); Mk. iii. 21 (His relations held Him to be beside Himself); Mk. xiii. 32 ("Of that day and of that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son but the Father"); Mk. xv. 34, Mt. xxvii. 46 ("My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"). To these he adds four more which have reference to Jesus' power to work miracles, viz.: Mk. viii. 12 (Jesus declines to work a sign); Mk. vi. 5 ff. (Jesus was able to do no mighty works in Nazareth); Mk. viii. 14–21 ("The leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod" refers not to bread but to teaching); Mt. xi. 5; Lk. vii. 22 (the signs of the Messiah are only figuratively miraculous). These nine passages he calls "the foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus." In his view, they prove, on the one hand, that "he [Jesus] really did exist, and that the Gospels contain at least some trustworthy facts concerning him,"—a matter which, he seems to suggest, would be subject to legitimate doubt in the absence of such passages; and, on the other hand, that "in the person of Jesus we have to do with a completely human being, and that the divine is to be sought in him only in the form in which it is capable of being found in a man."[30] From them as a basis, he proposes to work out, admitting nothing to be credible which is not accordant with the non-miraculous, purely human, Jesus which these passages imply.

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[28] The meaning of these last sentences is practically that, having by the processes of criticism outlined in the preceding paragraph secured a merely human Jesus, Schmiedel now sets himself to present as high a conception of this merely human Jesus as he can without overstepping the bounds of His mere humanity. Consequently he is willing to point to such passages as Mt. vii. 29; Mk. vi. 34; Mt. xi. 28 as "of the same truthful nature" as the "pillar passages," though the principle of their selection is now the opposite one, that they *enhance* the character of Jesus ("Jesus in Modern Criticism," pp. 25–26). He is even on this principle prepared to run directly in the teeth of the principle of his "pillar-passages." Those passages, he says, have thrust themselves upon him because the statements in them are too inconsistent with the reverence in which Jesus was held by the community to represent their view, and must therefore have come from an earlier tradition which is true. But there are passages which in his judgment attribute to Jesus teachings which he refuses to believe were genuinely Jesus' because they are altogether too inconsistent with reverence for Him. There is, for example, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, in which (in his view) mere poverty is made a virtue, and mere riches a vice (Lk. xvi. 25). There is the parable of the unrighteous steward, in which mere relaxation of financial claims without any consideration of the rights and duties involved is made a shining virtue (Lk. xvi. 1–9). Why not reason that these are obviously fragments of an earlier tradition inconsistent with the worship in which Jesus had come to be held, and demonstrate to us that Jesus was an "Ebionite," a fanatical leveler? But Schmiedel draws back and remarks: "It should be obvious that Jesus cannot have said such things as these" ("Jesus in Modern Criticism," pp. 72–73), arguing against their genuineness after a fashion which sounds very strange on his lips, and raises the question whether he himself really believes in the principle of his "pillar-passages."

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The principle of procedure which Schmiedel invokes, it will be seen, he represents as one which is in universal use in like circumstances among profane historians. He represents it as altogether independent of literary criticism and as finding its chief value in this fact. He represents it further as yielding results which may be confidently depended upon. And he represents these results as totally reversing the portrait of Jesus presented in the documents subjected to this critical scrutiny, substituting for the divine Jesus which they depict a purely human Jesus. All this will become clearer as we attend to the subsequent expositions he has given of his method.

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[29] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881.

[30] *Ibid.*

The subject is introduced, in the little book on John,[31] in the course of a discussion of the miracles attributed to our Lord by John. John, it is remarked, represents our Lord as working miracles as "signs"; but we learn from Mk. viii. 11–13 that Jesus refused to give a "sign" to that generation. "And," continues Schmiedel, "He must really have made this declaration; for no one of His reporters would have invented it, since they, each and every one of them, believed that Jesus did work miracles with this purpose." Then he continues:

> "In order to place the significance of such passages in its full light, we give them the name of *foundation-pillars of a really scientific life of Jesus*. Every historical investigator, no matter in what field he works, follows the principle to hold for true in the first instance, in any account which testifies to reverence (*Verehrung*, 'worship') for its hero, that which runs counter to this reverence, because that cannot be based on invention. Since we possess a plurality of Gospels we can further observe how in one or more of them such passages are in part transformed, in part wholly omitted, because they were too objectionable precisely to reverence for Jesus. In their original form such passages show, therefore, in the most certain way how Jesus really thought and lived, namely after a fashion which we — with all recognition that there was something divine in Him — must call a genuinely human one. On the other hand, it is only such passages which give assurance that we may, at least in some degree, depend upon the Gospels in which they occur, that is to say the first three Gospels. Were they wholly lacking in them, it would be difficult to withstand the allegation that the Gospels *everywhere* give us only a sacred image painted on a gold ground, and we could therefore not at all know what kind of an appearance Jesus really made, or indeed perhaps even whether He ever existed at all. The 'foundation-pillars' upon

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[31] Pp. 16–17.

which, along with the one already mentioned, we can rely in order to obtain a right idea of the miraculous works of Jesus, we speak of at p. 31 f., and in chapter III., paragraphs 18 and 19; and of the remaining ones which are of importance for other aspects of Jesus' nature at pp. 18 f., 19 f., 21, 22, and 23.

"It is self-evident that what we find to be credible in the Synoptics is in no wise confined to these nine 'foundation-pillars.' It belongs to the chief tasks of an historical investigator, from his words and acts, to make the effect (*Erfolg*) which a great historical figure has had intelligible. This effect in Jesus' case is, however, so great that even an investigator who stands entirely cool in His presence must seek out and accept as true everything which is adapted to establish His greatness and to make the reverence felt for Him by His contemporaries intelligible, — it being premised, of course, that it does not contradict the portrait of Jesus obtained from the 'foundation-pillars,' and also does not otherwise rouse well-grounded doubts."

There is perhaps observable in this statement a certain heightening of what was more cautiously expressed in the initial statement, in the "Encyclopaedia Biblica." There, for example, we were told that it was when a historian found himself before a unique document testifying to the worship of a hero unknown to other sources that he resorted to this method of investigating the credibility of his otherwise uncontrollable informant. Here all this qualification falls away and it is spoken of as if this were a universally practised method in all historical research. The general untrustworthiness of the evangelical portrait of Jesus and the closeness of the alternative that we should have no credible account of Jesus and perhaps be left in doubt of his very existence seems also to be somewhat more extremely suggested.

We are in a different atmosphere in the Preface to Arno Neumann's "Jesus." Here Schmiedel is defending his critical method and its results against the strictures of John M. Robertson, who holds that Jesus is a pure myth and that therefore the Gospels cannot contain any credible testimony to His existence. Schmiedel is concerned accordingly to throw into emphasis the positive side of his method, and to make plain that he obtains by it not mere probability but certainty as to Jesus — both as to His existence and as to His true character. He concedes that the Gospels present the appearance of altogether untrustworthy narratives, and that we are, therefore, with them on our hands as our sources of knowledge of Jesus, in a very unfavorable position. But he reasons thus. [32]

> "Yet let us examine a little more closely. What are the portions of the Gospels which are so persistently objected to? We find that they are, to say all in a word, those in which Jesus appears as a Divine Being whether in virtue of what He says or in virtue of what He does. And the reason why exception is taken to these passages may be stated thus: The Gospels are, all of them, the work of worshippers of Jesus, and their contents have been handed down through the channel of tradition in like manner by His worshippers; the portions to which exception is taken are open to the suspicion that they are the outcome of these feelings of devotion, and not purely objective renderings of the facts as they actually occurred. But how, let us ask, if the Gospels also contain portions which are absolutely free from any suspicion whatever of this sort? So far as the difficulty just referred to is concerned, these at least may be historical. May be; yet it is also possible that they may not be; plainly, in fact, they cannot be if the person of Jesus is altogether unhistorical. For example: moral precepts which in themselves might justify no suspicion against the historical character of the person to whom they are attributed, could yet very easily be put into the mouth of a purely invented and in no sense historical Jesus.
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> "Thus we find ourselves still left in the unfavorable position already indicated — unless peradventure, we should be able to find in the Gospels some passages which far from being equally appropriate alike to an invented and to a historical Jesus, should be wholly impossible in the former case. If Jesus is an imaginary person, the things which are, without historical foundation, ascribed to Him are entirely due to the reverence in which He was held. If, accordingly, we find in the Gospels any passages which cannot by any possibility have found their inspiration in the worshipful regard in which He was held, and which in fact are, on the contrary, incompatible with it, they in themselves prove that the Gospels con-

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[32] Pp. ix. ff.

tain at least something that has been rightly handed down; for if these passages had not been handed down to the Evangelists and those who preceded them in a manner that made doubt impossible, they would never have found admission into our Gospels at all.

"Such was the underlying thought when in the 'Encyclopaedia Biblica' article *Gospels*, §§ 131, 139 f., I characterized nine passages in the Synoptical Gospels as 'the foundation-pillars for a truly scientific life of Jesus.' I limited myself to so small a number because I desired to include no instance against the evidential value of which any objection could possibly be taken with some hope of success; and further, I, of set purpose, selected only those passages in which it is possible to show from the text of the Gospels themselves that they are incompatible with the worship in which Jesus came to be held. Thus they are, all of them, found only in one Gospel, or at most two; the second and third, or the third, either omits the passage in question, although, by universal consent, the author who omits must have known at least one of the Gospels in which it occurs, or the source from which it was drawn; or alternatively, he turns it round, often with great ingenuity and boldness, in such a manner that it loses the element which makes it open to exception from the point of view of a worshipper of Jesus."

What is most insisted upon in this statement is that there are sought (and found) in Schmiedel's "pillar-passages" not merely affirmations which are appropriate to a human Jesus, but affirmations which are impossible for a Divine Jesus. Their characteristic is, as Schmiedel expresses it on a later page,[33] that "they are not consistent with the worship in which Jesus had come to be held"; that they "are appropriate only to a man, and could never, by any possibility, have been written had the author been thinking of a demi-god." There are in the Synoptic Gospels, as Schmiedel explains,[34] three classes of "sayings of Jesus (or, to speak more correctly, passages in the Synoptics about Jesus)": "first, those which are plainly incredible; secondly, those which are plainly credible; and in the third category those which occupy an intermediate position as bearing on the face of them no certain mark either of incredibility or of credibility." This is Schmiedel's way of saying that there are some passages which clearly ascribe a supernatural character to Jesus; some which are clearly inconsistent with a supernatural character in Him; and still some others which do not raise the question of His supernatural character at all. This third class of passages Schmiedel is perfectly willing to accept as transmitting a true tradition: he actually does so accept them. But not on their own credit, but only on the faith of the small class of passages — his "pillar-passages" — which assure him of the actual existence of a merely human Jesus to whom, then, it is natural to ascribe these "indifferent" passages also. For, as he says in his primary statement,[35] and repeats here:[36] "If we discover any such points — even if only a few — they guarantee not only their own contents but also much more. For in that case one may also hold as credible all else which agrees in character with these, and is in other respects not open to suspicion." The fundamental characteristic of the "pillar-passages," without which they would not be "pillar-passages," is, therefore, that they are absolutely irreconcilable with a supernatural Jesus.

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[33] P. xvii.

[34] Pp. xiii f.

The statement in the lecture on "Jesus and Modern Criticism"[37] is made from the same standpoint as that in the Preface to Neumann's "Jesus" and adds very little to it. We are told that "it is of little use merely to say in a vague and general way that the figure of Jesus portrayed in the Gospels could not possibly have been invented." What is of importance is that we should recognize that "the Gospels, though they seem to be very much exposed to doubt, actually contain in themselves the best means of overcoming it."

> "All we require to do is to limit the statement that their contents could not have been invented, which in its vague and general form possesses no evidential value, to specific passages in which it is not open to question. I select nine such passages, and, in order to emphasize their importance, give them a special name; I call them the *foundation-pillars of a really scientific life of Jesus.*

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[35] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," coll. 1872–1873, § 131.

[36] Neumann, p. xiii.

[37] Pp. 15 ff., 22 ff.

"Now, the important point is that they are chosen on the same principles which guide every critical historian in extra-theological fields. When we make our first acquaintance with a historical person in a book which is throughout influenced by a feeling of worship for its hero, as the Gospels are by a feeling of worship for Jesus, in the first rank of credibility we place those passages of the book which really run counter to this feeling; for we realize that, the writer's sentiments being what they were, such passages cannot have been invented by the author of the book; nor would they have been taken from the records at his service if their absolute truthfulness had not forced itself upon him. In the case of the Evangelists, moreover, we are so fortunate as to be able to note how a record of this kind which runs counter to the author's feeling of worship for Jesus is often incorporated by one or by two of them, while the other has omitted it or has altered it with the clear intention of emphasizing Jesus' higher rank. I have included among my foundation-pillars only such passages as have been passed over or altered by at least one of the three Evangelists. Of course, in the case of almost every one of these, it has already been said once, perhaps often, that it could not be the product of an inventive mind. What scholars had previously neglected to do was to make these passages the starting point for the critical treatment of the life of Jesus. . . .

"*What then have I gained in these nine 'foundation-pillars'?* You will perhaps say, 'Very little.' I reply, 'I have gained just enough.' . . . In a word, I know, on the one hand, that his person cannot be referred to the region of myth; on the other hand, that he was man in the full sense of the term, and that, without of course denying that the divine character was in him, this could be found only in the shape in which it could be found in any human being.

"I think, therefore, that if we knew no more, we should know by no means little about him. But, as a matter of fact, the 'foundation-pillars' are but the starting-point of our study of the life of Jesus. . . . We must, therefore, work upon the principle that, together with the 'foundation-pillars,' and as a result of them, everything in the first three Gospels deserves belief which would tend to establish Jesus' greatness, provided that it harmonizes with the picture produced by the foundation-pillars, and in other respects does not raise suspicion."

Certainly, with four such extended expositions of his method, it would be difficult seriously to misapprehend

Schmiedel's essential meaning. Nevertheless some difficulty has apparently been experienced in grasping at once what we may call the principle of direct contradiction which forms its core. Even Otto Schmiedel, for example, seems to lose hold of it, — although, no doubt he does not profess to do more than to follow his brother's scheme "in its essentials." His version of it runs as follows:[38] Brother Ot

> "The criticism of the sources has brought us thus far. I will now make a further attempt, from general considerations which are independent of the search for sources, to find certain points of support to give the necessary certainty to the portrait of the life of Jesus which we are seeking to sketch. We have recognized it as an essential characteristic of the presentations of the lives of the founders of religions and redemptive personalities, that with holy zeal they glorify, and indeed *deify* these personalities. The more this tendency increases the more does the account lose its historical character and become legendary. Let us turn the matter around. If we find in the Gospels passages which declare of Jesus something in contradiction to this tendency to glorification, which, however, have been altered or omitted by *later* Gospels, because they take offence at these human things, at this lack of glorification, then we may with assurance infer from this that these passages which do *not* glorify Jesus are *old* and *authentic*."

He then adduces five examples of such passages, intimating in passing that many more might be produced, and declares of them in the mass that they form the skeleton of what is incontestable and thus provide a solid basis for the Life of Jesus. Three of his five passages, he takes over from P. W. Schmiedel. The two that are added can scarcely be said to preserve perfectly the characteristic feature claimed for the "pillar-passages," — express contradiction of the deity ascribed to Jesus in the historical tradition. They are expounded by Otto Schmiedel thus:

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> "In the oldest Gospel, Mark, it is continually emphasized that Jesus *forbade* His disciples to make His deeds of healing known.

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[38] "Die Hauptprobleme der Leben-Jesu Forschung." 2 1906, pp. 46 ff.

In the later Gospels this trait retires, and indeed the number and importance of the deeds of healing steadily increases. This last serves for glorification. *Therefore* the representation of Mark, Jesus' horror of being trumpeted as a miracle-worker, is all the more certainly historical. . . ."

"The older Gospels relate, *without* assignment of reasons, that Jesus was betrayed by Judas Iscariot. Luke and John seek all kinds of explanations for this, while the enemies of Christianity mock at the betrayal of the Master by one of His own disciples: all the more certain is it that the betrayal was not invented by Jesus' adherents, but is old and historical."

It does not appear why a divine, no less than a human Jesus, might not, for reasons of His own, forbid His cures to be heralded abroad; or why a divine, no less than a human Jesus, might not be betrayed by one of His own disciples. The stress which P. W. Schmiedel lays on the contradiction to the deity of Jesus in his "pillar-passages," Otto Schmiedel lays rather on modifications by later Gospels of statements in the earlier which struck the Christian feeling of the time as making too little for the glory of Jesus. The alteration or omission of the statements of his "pillar-passages" by one or another of the Gospels had been appealed to by P. W. Schmiedel only as a secondary consideration; it bears the character of a verification of the asserted offensiveness of these passages to the Christian feeling of the day. The hinge of his argument turns on the intrinsic inconsistency of these statements with the deification of Jesus. He infers immediately from this their "uninventibility" by the authors of the Gospels and of the tradition which the Gospels represent, and their consequent originality. The hinge of Otto Schmiedel's argument, on the other hand, turns on the modifications which these statements have suffered at the hands of later Evangelists. From these he infers the relative originality of the simpler statement, and by further consequence the unpretentiousness of Jesus' self-manifestation. The movement of thought in the two cases is not only different but directly opposite. This is particularly apparent in the diverse treatment given by the two writers to the "pillar-

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passages" which are adduced by both. On Mark vi. 5 f. P. W. Schmiedel writes: [39]

> "When He appeared in His native city of Nazareth He was sneered at as one of whom it was known whose son and brother He was, and He was made to feel that a prophet finds no honor in His own country. Now in Mark (vi. 5 f.) we read further: 'And He could not do any mighty work there, except He healed a few sick folk by laying His hands upon them; and He marveled at their unbelief.' He could not. This is another narrative like that of the sign of Jonah; it most certainly would not be found in our Gospels if it had not been handed down by someone who had himself witnessed the occurrences and then been repeated unaltered. How unacceptable it must have been to the later narrators, all of whom, Mark not excepted, were convinced of Jesus' power to work miracles, is shown by Matthew, who (xiii. 58 f.) reports it thus: 'And He *did* there not many mighty works, because of their unbelief.'"

In Otto Schmiedel's hands, we find, on the contrary, this essentially different representation (we do not stop to point out the misreport of what Mark says, or even the remarkable illation): [40]

> "In Mk., vi. 5 there stands: In Nazareth Jesus *could* work no miraculous cures because of the lack of faith in His fellow-townsmen. In Mt. xiii. 58: 'He did there *not many* miracles.' It is, therefore, historically certain that Jesus' healing work was *dependent* psychologically on the *trust* of those who sought the healing."

Of Mk. xiii. 32, P. W. Schmiedel, contrasting it with John's ascription of omniscience to Jesus, writes: [41]

> "In the Synoptics . . . we find His express declaration (Mk. xiii. 32) that 'of that day,' that is to say that on which He was to return from heaven in order to establish the kingdom of God on earth, 'or of that hour, knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, nor yet the Son, but the Father only'; another one of the statements which certainly no one of His worshippers invented. Luke leaves it out altogether; Matthew (according to the probably original text) at least the decisive words 'nor yet the Son.'

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[39] "Das vierte Evangelium, etc.," pp. 31–32.

[40] P. 47.

[41] "Das vierte Evangelium, etc.," p. 22.

What we find in Otto Schmiedel is:

> " Mk. xiii. 32 says: Time and hour *when* the Son of Man returns on the clouds of heaven knoweth no one, *not even the Son*. Mt. xxiv. 36 leaves out ' not even the Son ' as offensive to him. Therefore these words are *genuine*. Jesus claims for Himself therefore *no* knowledge of the future."

In the treatment of the remaining passage adduced by them both a more primary place seems to be given by P. W. Schmiedel to the forms in which it appears in the several Gospels. This, however, is an illusion, and is due largely to the circumstance that his primary discussion of it happens to be introduced at that point in his argument where he is preoccupied with the relations of the Gospels to one another.[42] As in the other cases we quote what he says about it in his booklet on John's Gospel: [43]

> " And equally unacceptable to this Evangelist would be the record in Mk. (x. 17 f.) and Lk. that Jesus, to the address of a rich man, ' Good Master, what must I do to obtain eternal life? ' replied: ' Why callest thou me good? No one is good except God alone.' And yet beyond question, this reply came from Jesus' lips. How little it could have been invented by anyone of His worshippers, who drive the pen in the Gospels, Matthew shows. With him (xix. 16 f.), the rich man says, ' Master, what good thing must I do in order to have eternal life? And Jesus answers, ' Why askest thou me concerning the good? There is One that is good.' How does Jesus come here to the six last words? Should He not, since He was asked concerning the good, proceed: ' There is *one thing* that is good? ' And that would be the only suitable reply not only because of what had preceded, but also because of what follows; for Jesus says further, ' If, however, thou wouldst enter into life, keep the commandments.' Accordingly, in Jesus' opinion, the good concerning which He was asked consists in keeping the commandments. How did Matthew come to the words, ' There is One that is good? ' Only by having before him, as he wrote, the language of Mark. Here we have our finger on the way in which Matthew, with conscious purpose, altered this language in its opening words, so that it should

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[42] " Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1847 (b).

[43] Pp. 19 f.

no longer be offensive, and on the way in which, at the end, he has left a few words of it unaltered, which betray to us the manner in which the thing has been done."

Here also Otto Schmiedel's whole case is summed up in the relations of the Synoptical reports:

"Here also belongs the passage which has been mentioned in another connection,[44] where Jesus, in Mk. x. 18, said to the rich young man, 'Why callest thou me good. No one is good except God.' Jesus denies, therefore, His absolute sinlessness. Mat. xix. 17 seeks to efface this."

The same imperfect grasp upon the exact point of the "pillar-passages" which deflects Otto Schmiedel's treatment of them, has affected also the use made of them by Schmiedel's pupil, Arno Neumann. Neumann does, indeed, quite purely reproduce Schmiedel's point of view in his general statement. After having likened the attempt to get at the true tradition of Jesus' life, to working through a series of geological strata, he raises the question whether this does not "make the whole foundation [of our knowledge of Jesus] precarious, and open a door to all kinds of arbitrary conjecture." He then proceeds:[45]

Pupil Neuma
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"It would do so if we did not come upon such elements in the tradition as the worshippers of Jesus would never have preserved unless they had been handed down as facts in the story of Jesus' life, or if we were no longer able to show from the parallel accounts how worship has constantly changed the old data handed down by traditions and adapted them to its own wishes. But we do find sayings and incidents of this description in one or other of the Gospels, be they few or many, and, this being so, we are entitled to draw from them general inferences as to what is credible in the life and work of Jesus. For it is impossible (here every historian will agree) for one who worships a hero to think and speak in such a way as to contradict or essentially modify his own worship.[46] Statements which do this can be nothing more or less than survivals of the truth, precious fragments which have been covered and well-nigh hidden for ever by the deposits of later times. For this reason a scholar of our own time, Dr. Schmiedel, has called these portions of the tradition, 'foundation-pillars of the life of Jesus.' The existence of such statements is the salvation of the Synoptic Gospels, giving them a definite value of sources.[47] The Gospels cannot be pure sagas or legends when material so intractable is enshrined in them."

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[44] Cf. p. 27: "In Mk. x. 18 Jesus says to the rich young man, 'Why callest thou me good? No one is good except God.' To Matthew (xix. 17) this statement seemed to put the sinlessness of Jesus in danger, and so he changed it to, 'Why askest thou me concerning the good (neuter)?' Now, however, the following, 'No one is good,' etc., naturally no longer fits on."

[45] "Jesus," pp. 9 ff.

Perhaps a certain imperfection in Neumann's appreciation of the stringency of the presumed effect of the "pillar-passages" is already betrayed by the admission of an alternative expression into the phrase declaring it impossible for a worshipping writer to invent or assert anything not merely which contradicts but also which "essentially modifies" his own worship. We perceive clearly his defection from this stringency, however, only when we scan his illustrative passages. He adduces eight of these, two of Schmiedel's being omitted, and a new one added and indeed given the premier place in the list. The two omitted — Mk. viii. 14–21, and Mt. xi. 5 — are both, in Schmiedel's view, "transformed parables" and the inclusion of them in the "pillar-passages" is in any case surprising, so that we need not wonder that Neumann omits them, although perfectly agreeing with Schmiedel that they are "transformed parables."[48] The passage added is, however, as little stringent as any could be. It is Lk. ii. 52 (cf. iv. 16) which "says that Jesus grew in stature in a truly human way." "Had the writer been a worshipper of Jesus as a deity," Neumann comments, "he would have presented Him to us as full-grown," — of which we have no other assurance, however, than this expres-

Omits-2
Adds-1

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[46] More literally: "For every historian will pronounce it impossible that one who reverences" (or "worships") "a hero should invent or assert things which contradict his own reverence" (or "worship"), "or modify it fundamentally."

[47] More literally: "By their presence a certain source-value is preserved to the Synoptic Gospels."

[48] See pp. 76, 86. Neumann calls attention on p. 11, note 1, to his passing them by here, apparently in order to avoid giving the impression that he is correcting Schmiedel.

sion of opinion by Neumann himself, in opposition to the example of Matthew and Luke, both of whom were "worshippers of Jesus" and both of whom record the story of His infancy. But what most clearly shows us the imperfection of Neumann's grasp on the peculiarity of the "pillar-passages" is a remark he adjoins at the end of the list, in which he endeavors to make them do double duty. "All these passages," he tells us, "are of such a nature as neither the worship of Jesus in the growing church, nor yet the religious socialism of the masses, could ever have invented."[49] But why could not a "religious socialist" believe that Jesus grew up like any other boy? Or that Jesus refused to work "signs," or indeed that He could not work miracles; or that He did not know all that the future had in store for Him or His followers? Or, indeed, that He was not absolutely without sin, or could be thought by His kinspeople to be out of His head, or could have felt Himself deserted by God in the end? Socialists in our own day seem to have no difficulty in believing such things. Neumann has obviously temporarily lost the exact point of view of the "pillar-passages," and consequently has confused the argument which is built upon them. We say he has "temporarily" lost their point of view; for he immediately recovers it and writes:

Not so stringe

> "They prove, indeed, that the figure of Jesus was originally a truly human one, and that we can therefore speak of Him as "divine," only in the sense that divinity is possible within the limits of the human."

He was, no doubt, greatly human, and we must of course paint Him so; but

> "There is only one critical limitation that need be added: the proviso, namely, that construction must be such as will adapt itself to the adamantine restrictions of the knowledge given in our foundation texts."

We know much more of Jesus than we can learn from the "pillar-passages"; but the Jesus we know cannot transcend the Jesus of these fundamental texts. They give us the absolute norm of what Jesus was.

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[49] The German is perhaps a little more lucid: "The list of passages which the common reverence of the growing church, or for that matter the religious socialism of the masses could never have invented."

The tendency of Schmiedel's followers to abate a little of the stringency of the idea of the "pillar-passages" means, of course, a tendency, more or less developed, to look at them broadly as passages which do not find their explanation in "the faith of the community" and may therefore very well be (or perhaps we may insist, are most probably, or even quite certainly) genuine traditions; rather than narrowly, as passages which, because they directly contradict the reverence for Jesus which forms the primary bias of the vehicles of the tradition, oral or written, that has preserved for us the memory of Jesus, must therefore necessarily preserve true traditions and give us not only our most reliable knowledge of Jesus but knowledge of Him which is absolutely trustworthy. And this change in point of view, as we cannot have failed to observe, is accompanied by an associated tendency to treat the appeal to such "pillar-passages" not so much as a substitute for literary criticism — though this is the precise thing which commends the appeal to them to Schmiedel himself — as rather as a supplement to it, called in only after it has done its work, to enable us to take a step farther than it can lead us. These tendencies, in proportion as they are yielded to, are tantamount, of course, to desertion of all that is distinctive in Schmiedel's critical method and reversion to the common methods of "Liberal" criticism, which first employs literary criticism in order to ascertain what the oldest sources contain, and then calls in historical criticism, — operating on the single canon that we are to penetrate by its aid behind "the faith of the community" — that we may ascertain what, in that which is transmitted by the sources, is true. It will conduce to a better understanding, both of the general "Liberal" method and of the peculiarity of Schmiedel's method if we bring into view a tolerably full account of the "Liberal" method in one of its most consistent and yet genial recent exponents. We cannot do better for this purpose than turn to the exposition of it by W. Heitmüller, in his interesting article "Jesus Christ" in

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Schiele and Zscharnack's "Encyclopaedia," published under the title of "Die Religion in Geschichte und Gegenwart."[50] The circumstances that Heitmüller is writing for a general, educated and not merely a technically theological public, and that Schmiedel's criticism is apparently not wholly out of his thought, only add to the value of his exposition for our purposes.

the Liberal (literary) meth: plus Schmiede

At the point at which we enter his discussion he is engaged in searching out the trustworthy sources of knowledge of Jesus. He has just outlined the processes by which the evangelical documents are tested. It has been a long and difficult task to penetrate by this criticism to their Sources, and when we have reached these Sources our labors are far from being at an end. Mark and the Discourse-Source are after all not the *ultimate* Sources. The *ultimate* Sources are "the separate narratives and separate declarations or discourses of Jesus to be obtained from these and from the peculiar portions of Matthew and Luke, by the help of critical labor." And then, when we have got these well before us, we have to raise the question whether they give us "immediately historical, utilizable, trustworthy material." "Is the portrait of Jesus, — no, are the separate features of this portrait which look out upon us from these separate fragments — really genuine features?"[51] From the Discourse-Source and Mark (which with Heitmüller is the Narrative-Source), on to John we have found everything in a flux. What was there previous to the Discource-Source and Mark? Were not the same forces which modified the transmission subsequently already at work before these Sources arose? The question requires only to be put for the answer to come clearly back to us.

> "These narratives and declarations were taken from the oral tradition of the Christian community and written down about 60 or 70 A.D.; thus they had lived for thirty or forty years in the oral tradition, they were handed on from mouth to mouth, from hand to hand; through how many hands! What lived on further and was preserved was necessarily conditioned in its very substance by the

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[50] Vol. iii. 1912, coll. 356 ff.

[51] Col. 356.

nature and the need of the community. Accordingly, we must suppose it at least possible that these separate materials, as they are accessible to us in Mark, say, have been influenced by the faith of the community and those other entities. That means, however, that the ultimate direct Sources which can be reached by us, the separate declarations and narratives, do not, when taken strictly, carry us beyond the portrait of the Christ of the Palestinian community of about 50–70 A.D. To turn aside here from everything else for the sake of brevity, we need only to realize that the community which transmitted orally knowledge of Jesus, stood under the influence of belief in the resurrection of Jesus; how this belief must already have steeped even good reminiscences in an alien, new light! Nay, must we not assume that even for the immediate disciples recollection was disturbed in many points by the influence of the Easter experience and the faith which attaches itself to it? And in point of fact a more careful scrutiny shows that even in this oldest obtainable memorial, of separate declarations and separate narratives, legendary traits are present, that the belief and usage of the community have already exerted their moulding and forming power and activity.[52]

It is in this circumstance that the difficulty of research into the life of Jesus lies. " The starting-point of all further investigation is recognition that the ultimate Direct-Sources carry us only to the portrait of Jesus of the primitive community of about 60 A. D." [53] The question is whether we have any means — any possibility — of getting behind the portrait of Jesus of the community to the actual reality. Some are utterly sceptical of doing so. But this extreme scepticism is unreasonable. It is not difficult to show that the portrait of Christ current in the community of 60 A.D. is not a simply imaginary one.

" That in spite of legendary, mythological elements, in spite of the repainting by the faith of the community, which must be admitted, in this Evangelical representation, there are historical elements in the ultimate sources of which we have spoken, will, in accordance with universally recognized principles, have to be allowed to be certain if *constituents* are found in them which *are not reconcilable* (*vereinbar*) with the faith of the community to which the whole portrait belongs. What does not stand in harmony with it can certainly not owe its origin to it. Not a few constituents, now, of this kind are found. They not seldom betray themselves as contradictory to the faith of the community by this — that they are omitted or altered by the later narrators. Let us indicate some of them.[54] In Mk. x. 17 ff. Jesus repudiates the address of 'Good Master' with the words, 'Why callest thou me good? None is good but God only.' The community looked upon its Lord as sinless; this account is not then the product of their belief. How little the declaration of Jesus pleased the community is shown by its alteration by the later Mt. xix. 16 ff., which formulates the question of the young man thus: 'Master, what good thing must I do?' and makes Jesus answer: 'Wherefore askest thou me concerning the good? Only One is good.' . . . The Gethsemane scene, Mk. xiv. 32–42 which shows Jesus in deep distress, could never have been invented by the believing community; it glorified Him precisely as one who went of His own will to His death. Luke softens down the account; John omits it. The story of Mk. iii. 21, according to which His own people say of Jesus, 'He is beside Himself,' cannot be understood as an invention of the faith which glorified Jesus: Matthew and Luke pass the story by. The community saw in Peter its chief Apostle: it cannot have invented his shameful denial. The community glorified the disciples: the story of their cowardly flight (Mk. xiv. 50) when Jesus went to His death, was certainly not the product of their fancy: Luke and John suppress this also. It was early the belief of the community (I Cor. xv. 1 ff.) that Jesus died for the sins of men. And yet in the old tradition there are very few declarations in which this belief has found any sort of expression (Mk. x. 45; xiv. 24); but there has been preserved on the other hand a parable (Lk. xv. 11 ff.), that of the Lost Son, which is utterly irreconcilable with this dominant idea.[55] These and other observations suffice to prove with compelling convincingness that in the community's portrait of Jesus, about 50–70 A.D., there are in any case contained and are recognizable some indubitably genuine original traits. This fact, now, is adapted to strengthen confidence in the tradition in general. For if, as we see here, the community has transmitted declarations and narratives which contradict its own conception, it follows that this community has shown respect for the tradition, and in any case has not set itself simply to suppress what was unpleasant to it. And now, there force themselves on the attentive eye other observations also which operate greatly to strengthen confidence in the oldest tradition."[56]

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[52] Coll. 356–357.

[53] Col. 357.

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[54] It will be observed that of the six passages here adduced by Heitmüller, two are common to him and Schmiedel (Mk. x. 17; iii. 21), and a third is of the same character (Mk. ix. 22-32, and is, of course, looked upon by Schmiedel in the same light as the others (see "Das vierte Evangelium, etc.," p. 20); a fourth, the Parable of the Lost Son (Lk. xv. 11 ff.) although belonging to another category is, of course, also accepted as genuine by Schmiedel with the same heartiness as by Heitmüller ("Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1841); while the two remaining ones concern the sensitivity of the early community for the honor of the Apostles, not of Jesus.

[55] We may ask in passing what ground on Heitmüller's principles there

Heitmüller then proceeds to adduce the Aramaic coloring of the basis of both Mark and the Discourse-Source, their particularity in intimate details, the general tone of the Discourse-Source, the cultivated memories of the men of the day, as conducing to the conclusion that there is much gold mingled with the dross in the tradition.[57] The question is how the gold is to

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is for assigning Lk. xv. 11 ff. to the oldest tradition, seeing that it occurs neither in Mk. nor in the Discourse-Source. Heitmüller's account of the parables (col. 361) is: "With respect to the apothegms and parables the principle that that will pass for genuine which seems individual, striking and original, will not be wholly rejected, but as a principle which is not decisive, will be applied only with the greatest caution." Cf. Schmiedel, "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1841. From our own point of view, there is of course no reason why the matter peculiar to Luke should not be of as indisputable originality as that which is common to him with Matthew or with Matthew and Mark. Cf. Schmiedel, *ibid.*, col. 1868; and especially Weinel, *ZTK*, 1910, I. p. 24: "'Finally Wellhausen has ventured on the proposition: 'The presupposition is self-evident that we must recognize in the peculiar matter which is found in one of the Evangelists, the latest literary stratum' ("Einleitung, etc.," p. 73). That is true — provided only, precisely in Wellhausen, it does not mean more than it says, provided only there is not continually connected with it an attempt to assign to these passages a lower rank not only literarily but also *historically*, that is to say with reference to their value as sources. It is however, wholly false to hold a narrative better attested for this reason — that three Evangelists (that means, however, Mark, which the others follow) or that two (that means, however, the Discourse-Source) report it — than if only one (that means another tradition) reports it. That a tradition has been written down say ten years after Mark does not weight it with a presupposition against it."

[56] Coll. 358 ff.

[57] Col. 361.

be extracted. And the answer is that first, by literary criticism, the oldest attainable form of each narrative or declaration is to be established, and then historical criticism is to be called in. At the foundation is to be laid "the material which runs counter to the belief, the theology, the customs, the cultus of the primitive community, or which at least does not completely correspond with it. "We may have," he declares, "unconditional confidence in such material." We may admit, along with this, much that stands in close relation with it, and yet is in harmony with the belief of the community. On the other hand, we must pronounce ungenuine everything which "all too plainly corresponds with the belief, the cultus, and the dogmatic and apologetical needs of the community, or can be explained only from them." Our scrupulosity must be particularly active "against everything that lay especially at the heart of the oldest Christianity" — such as belief in Jesus' messiahship, His approaching return, the whole domain of so-called eschatology, His passion and resurrection, His miraculous power. In this careful and laborious fashion it will be possible to penetrate behind the community's portrait of Christ at about 60 A.D. and approach the truth about Jesus.

The critical methods of Schmiedel and Heitmüller are fundamentally the same; and yet they differ at cardinal points. Heitmüller, as well as Schmiedel, acknowledges the failure of literary criticism to reach a stratum of tradition in which Jesus is other than the divine figure which the Evangelists paint Him; and like Schmiedel he calls in historical criticism to recover some trustworthy traces of a merely human Jesus. He Differences
A. applies this historical criticism, however, only to the Sources 1.
which literary criticism has unearthed, and therefore finds his "pillar-passages" not, as Schmiedel does, in any of the Synoptic Gospels indifferently, but all in Mark, which is to him the Narrative-Source.[58] The principle of his "pillar-passages" is 2
not, as with Schmiedel (or at least not so openly), narrowly that they directly contradict the deifying conception of Jesus which dominated the transmitters of the tradition, but more

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[58] For exceptions, see above note 55.

broadly that they contradict, or at least do not find their explanation in, the general point of view of the early Christian community; they do not reflect " interests " of that community. Accordingly the evidential value of these " pillar-passages " as witnesses to the real Jesus is hardly as great with Heitmüller as with Schmiedel. With Heitmüller they form no doubt as with Schmiedel the nucleus of " all sound historical knowledge of Jesus," but they scarcely come with the demonstrative force which they take on in Schmiedel's hands, placing beyond all possibility of question both the actual existence and the purely human character of Jesus. From the " pillar-passages " both work outwards to the same general results with respect both to the compass of the transmitted material which may be utilized in forming our picture of Jesus and His life and work; and with respect to the actual portrait of Jesus which is derived from this material as the genuine Jesus of history. The principle of the construction of the real Jesus of history in both writers alike is that of contradiction to the whole mass of the testimony concerning Him, which is set aside on no other ground than that it is possible to find here and there imbedded in it a statement which seems to these writers not perfectly consistent with its general drift. As to the legitimacy of this procedure, particularly when the mass and weight of the testimony is considered, and the number and character of the contradictory passages, we for the moment leave the reader to judge for himself.

Although Schmiedel's critical method has been before the public since 1901, and very fully since 1906, it has as yet been subjected to very little formal criticism. This has been due partly, no doubt, to a feeling that it is only a modification — and that not a very important modification — of the ordinary critical procedure in general use among " Liberal " theologians, and partly to a greater or less failure to apprehend precisely the nature of the modification in the ordinary " Liberal " procedure which it proposes. Perhaps also account should be taken of the circumstance that no separate work has been devoted by Schmiedel himself to the exposition of his proposals, but they have been presented only incidentally in works whose chief concernment lies elsewhere. In reviews of these publications there has been, of course, some expression of opinion upon this portion of their contents also, more or less fully supported by reasoning. Only here and there, however, has there been any extended discussion of the new critical method in its details, except indeed at the hands of the extreme radicals, who deny the very existence of Jesus.[59] It is part of Schmiedel's contention, it will be remembered, that his method supplies a short and easy demonstration of the actual existence of Jesus. This side of his contention has attracted the attention and drawn the fire of those writers who are engaged in an attempt to persuade the public that the whole figure of Jesus is mythical. Little of value in the way of general criticism of Schmiedel's method could be expected from this quarter; and in point of fact these writers usually lose themselves quickly in discussions of the exegesis of the passages adduced by Schmiedel as "pillar-passages," ordinarily in an effort to vacate their literal sense and to impose on them a purely symbolical significance, which would make them part and parcel of the myth of Jesus, the pure product of the invention of His votaries.

Hyper-Liberal Criticism of Sc

"There are no passages in the Gospels," declares W. B. Smith,[60] which testify to a pure humanity for Jesus. It is of course set forth how He teaches, journeys from place to place, how even He sleeps and (in a very transparent parable) hungers, how he works miracles, is arrested, imprisoned, tried, condemned, executed, buried and rises again. But all this is intended only figuratively; it is only the linen cloth that is thrown around the divine form of the 'new doctrine'; it is only the historical projection of a system of religious ideas. The profound thinkers who invented these parables and symbols were fully conscious of their real inward meaning, as were also those who first heard them, and repeated and recorded them."

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[59] E.g. John M. Robertson, "Pagan Christs," 1903, pp. 227–238; Friedrich Steudel, "Im Kampf um die Christusmythe," 1910, pp. 88–110; William Benjamin Smith, "Ecce Deus: die urchristliche Lehre des reingöttlichen Jesu," 1911, pp. 104–224 (E. T. under same title, 1912); Arthur Drews, "Die Zeugnisse für die Geschichtlichkeit Jesu," 1911, pp. 212–225 (E. T. "The Witnesses to the Historicity of Jesus," 1912 pp. 144–156). With these writers, no doubt, Eduard Hertlein, *Protestantische Monatshefte*, x. (1906) pp. 386 ff. may be classed for the essence of the matter without danger of great injustice. Cf. also F. Ziller, "Die moderne Bibelwissenschaft und die Krisis der evangelischen Kirche," 1910, pp. 117–118. Schmiedel replies elaborately to Robertson in his preface to Neumann's "Jesus," and to Hertlein in the next number of the *Protestantische Monatshefte*.

[60] "Ecce Deus," p. 199.

Nevertheless the broader question is not wholly left to one side, nor are there lacking in the remarks devoted to it criticisms which, if they do not quite go to the root of the matter, yet have real validity as against Schmiedel's modes of presenting his argument. It is common to all of these writers, for example, to point out that this argument proves too much; that, if it were valid, there are few characters of fiction, professed or mythical, which we should not have to recognize as having really existed. Thus, Friedrich Steudel urges: [61]

> "There is a fatal flaw involved in the whole of the demonstration which Schmiedel essays. It is, no doubt, true that when a historian portrays a personality the historicity of which is *otherwise established*, most credit will be given to those accounts which stand in a certain contradiction to the characterization which is intended to be given of him in general. But it could never be erected into a universally valid method, to conclude solely from the presence of such traits in a tradition to the historicity of a personality depicted in it. For in that case, to speak plainly, even a Zeus to whom his worshippers have imputed all sorts of vicious, human — only too human — traits must be a historical personality because it cannot be otherwise understood how his worshippers could have ascribed to him such human traits. Indeed any contradictory trait which a critic discovers in the characters of a dramatic poem must, according to the requirements of Schmiedel's method, bring him to the view that the poet cannot have been inventing here but must have had a historical model. Or, to make the application to our own case, — if the historicity of Jesus, — which, however, is just the thing that stands in question — *did not stand in question*, then it could be said that when the writer who deifies Him, nevertheless adduces human traits, there the historical element lies most certainly before us; but historicity can and may never be concluded

miedel valid only -

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[61] P. 98.

merely from the fact of apparent contradictions within a portrait which on other grounds has become questionable, especially when, as in the case in hand, these contradictions find their simplest and most natural explanation in the dogmatic and literary peculiarity of the sources."[62]

Following out the same line of remark, John M. Robertson[63] directs us to Grote's famous chapter on Greek myths, and cites from it a series of apt sentences in which Grote argues that no trustworthy historical facts can be extracted from such mythical stories. The passage adduced runs in its entirety, as follows:[64]

"The utmost which we accomplish by means of the semi-historical theory, even in its most successful applications, is, that after leaving out from the mythical narrative all that is miraculous or high-colored or extravagant, we arrive at a series of credible incidents — incidents which *may, perhaps*, have really occurred, and against which no intrinsic presumption can be raised. This is exactly the character of a well-written modern novel (as, for example, several among the compositions of Defoe), the whole story of which is such as may well have occurred in real life: it is plausible fiction, and nothing beyond. To raise plausible fiction up to the superior dignity of truth, some positive testimony or positive ground of inference must be shown; even the highest measure of intrinsic probability is not alone sufficient. A man who tells us that, on the day of the battle of Platæa, rain fell on the spot of ground where the city of New York now stands, will neither deserve nor obtain credit, because he can have had no means of positive knowledge; though the statement is not in the slightest degree improbable. On the other hand, statements in themselves very improbable may well deserve belief, provided they be supported by sufficient positive evidence;

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[62] Similarly Arthur Drews ("Die Zeugnisse, etc.," p. 221; E. T. p. 152): "If the historicity of Jesus was *otherwise established*, then it would be justifiable to conclude from the presence of such traits to the historical tradition which the author could not evade." On this reasoning, he remarks, we could prove the historicity of Heracles from the presence in his legend of traits which accord very ill with the otherwise noble figure of this hero.

[63] P. 230.

[64] George Grote, "History of Greece," American reprint of the second London ed., 1856, i., p. 429 (Robertson cites London, 1888, i., p. 382).

thus the canal dug by order of Xerxês across the promontory of Mount Athos, and the sailing of the Persian fleet through it, is a fact which I believe, because it is well-attested — notwithstanding its remarkable improbability, which so far misled Juvenal as to induce him to single out the narrative as a glaring example of Grecian mendacity."

The hinge of Grote's position, it will be seen, turns on the distinction between the possible and the actual, the credible and the certified. We may purge a narrative of impossibilities and not make a single step towards authenticating it. "The narrative ceases to be incredible, but it still remains uncertified, — a mere commonplace possibility."[65] "By the aid of conjecture, we get out of the impossible, and arrive at matters intrinsically plausible, but totally uncertified; beyond this point we cannot penetrate without the light of extrinsic evidence, since there is no intrinsic mark to distinguish truth from plausible fiction."[66] In the absence of positive evidence of reality, no superior intrinsic credibility attaching to certain events above others in the same narrative can accredit them as real.

Schmiedel has fairly laid himself open to a rejoinder of this kind by his reprehensible dallying with the suggestion that Jesus may never have really existed. If Heinrich Weinel thinks it necessary to rebuke the levity of his Preface to W. B. Smith's "Der vorchristliche Jesus,"[67] what shall we say of his repeated intimation in the exposition of his method of criticism, not merely that the real existence of Jesus is an open question, but even that it is a question which is all but closed, which apart from the "pillar-passages" would be closed, in an adverse sense? To say that "if passages of this kind were wholly wanting in them, it would be impossible to prove to a sceptic that any historical value whatever was to be assigned to the Gospels; he would be in a position to declare the picture of Jesus contained in them to be purely a work of phantasy and could remove the person of Jesus from the field of history";[68] or even, as it is elsewhere perhaps not quite so strongly put,[69] that "if they were wholly wanting in them, it would be difficult to withstand the allegation that the Gospels *everywhere* give us only a sacred image painted on a gold ground, and we could therefore not at all know what kind of an appearance Jesus really made, if not indeed even whether He ever existed at all"; — is of course mere fustian: nobody knows better than Schmiedel that even were there no Gospels at all the actual existence of Jesus would be exceptionally attested and altogether beyond question. But the effect of permitting himself to give utterance to such inconsiderate assertions is to hand himself over bound hand and foot to his enemies. He has treated the whole tradition of Jesus as if it were pure myth, and has represented the task of the historian to be to seek out and isolate the kernel of fact which lies at the center of this myth. It is open to anyone to rejoin that this task is hopeless; that on this pathway we can reach only the plausible, not the attested, while it is only the attested that can claim to be the actual. It is ineffective to urge in rebuttal that the statements appealed to do not range with the merely "credible" elements which are selected out from the body of the myth by those whom Grote speaks of as advocates of "the semi-historical theory," but have the peculiarity that they could not have been invented by the framers of the myth, because they are inconsistent with its whole substance and must therefore have been carried over unchanged from the pre-mythical tradition. It is easy to rejoin (with W. B. Smith) that an impossibility is attempted here; that no limits can be set to the invention of man; and it is equally easy to point out (reverting to Grote)

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[65] P. 431.

[66] P. 417–418.

[67] "Ist das 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, p. 13: "It was not, however, a merely tactical blunder in Schmiedel, to write for the German translation of Smith a Preface in which he not only maintained that it is not easy to refute Smith, but further that Smith's learning is 'by no means at the disposal of every one who works after a strictly scientific fashion'; and in which he speaks of the 'art of his scientific method.' This is simply untruth. And Schmiedel only gets what he deserves, when, despite his protestation that he does not think anything in Smith's construction right, he is everywhere invoked as compurgator — after allowance for the 'theological arabesque.'"

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[68] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881.

[69] "Das vierte Evangelium, etc.," p. 17.

that what is here claimed as a peculiarity of the "pillar-passages" is a common phenomenon in all divine myths. In them all express inconsistencies abound and in the nature of the case must abound, since human invention is incompetent to the task of consistently dramatizing deity. Let a poet be of the highest genius and do his utmost to realize his picture of the divine actor he is depicting: "If he does not consistently succeed in it, the reason is because consistency in such a matter is unattainable, since, after all, the analogies of common humanity, the only materials which the most creative imagination has to work upon, obtrude themselves involuntarily, and the lineaments of the man are thus seen even under a dress which promises superhuman proportions."[70] And what the most supreme art must fail in — how can we attribute that to the blind working of the mythopoeic fancy? But above all it is pertinent to rejoin that thus the whole ground of the argument has been shifted. It was assumed that the entire story of Jesus is mythical, and it was represented that unless some kernel of truth could be found embedded in this myth the historicity of Jesus could scarcely be defended. It is now assumed that the story of Jesus is, rather, essentially history. We are in effect betrayed into a vicious circle of reasoning; and we assign an underlying reality to statements like those contained in the "pillar-passages" only because we have from the beginning assumed that a reality lay behind our so-called myth and our task was merely to ascertain its nature. If there exists indeed good reason, extraneous to the myth itself which we are investigating, to believe in the actual existence of the hero it celebrates, why undoubtedly *cadit quaestio.* "Grote," even Robertson tells us,[71] "never argued that history proper, the record of a time by those who lived in it, is to be so tried; and he constantly accepts narratives which might conceivably be plausible fictions, — nay, he occasionally accepts tales which appear to some of us to be fictions. It is when we are dealing with myths that he denies our power to discriminate: in history proper he undertakes — at times too confidently — to discrimi-

[70] "History of Greece," i., p. 385.

[71] P. 232.

nate." We must really settle in our minds whether we are dealing with myth in which there may possibly be embedded some historical kernel, or with history which may possibly be encrusted with some mythical adornments, before we can profitably proceed with our criticism.

It is not worth our while to pause here to inquire into the justice of the extreme attitude taken up by Grote with reference to the possibility of extracting matters of fact from pure myths without the aid of extrinsic attestation.[72] This, at the moment, not merely because of the absurdity of treating the tradition of Jesus as if it were pure myth, but because of the absurdity of the proposal to treat it as if it were pure myth coming from Schmiedel. For despite this implication of his suggestion Schmiedel does not really believe that the historicity of the Jesus whose figure is presented to us in the Gospel-narratives is without sufficient attestation apart from the Gospels to render it indisputable. He may minimize the amount and force of this attestation, speaking, for example, of "the meagreness of the historical testimony regarding Him, whether in canonical writings outside the Gospels, or in profane writers, such as Josephus, Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny. . . ."[73] But this is only part of the attempt to give an external appearance of propriety to his dealing with the tradition of Jesus as if it were, if not pure myth, yet at least almost pure myth; and it does not in point of fact even so far fairly represent his own point of view. The plain fact is that Schmiedel comes to the Gospel narratives with the historicity of Jesus already immovably established on extrinsic grounds, and therefore cannot properly represent the historicity of Jesus as in any sense dependent on his power to separate out from those narratives on intrinsic grounds items of information about Jesus which cannot in the nature of the case be their invention. Whatever we may think of the validity of the argument that the presence of such statements in such a narrative can be accounted for only by the imposition of them upon it by primitive tradition, so that they must be recognized as preserving fragments of historical truth, in the actual case before us this argument can possess only corroborative value with reference to the historicity of Jesus, and acquires primary importance only with reference to the character of the historical Jesus already given. It is nothing less than a reprehensible misrepresentation of the state of the case to endeavor to convey an impression that the recognition of the historicity of Jesus is in any sense dependent on this argument. In point of fact no one is more assured than Schmiedel that it is quite firmly established altogether apart from this argument.

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[72] Grote himself tells us (pp. 408–409 note) that exception was already taken to the extremity of his views as well by an able article in *The Quarterly Review* for October, 1846 (what is meant is volume lxxviii. number clv., June, 1846, pp. 113 ff.), as by Professor Kortüm writing in the "Heidelberger Jahrbücher der Literatur" for 1846. The former contended that "the mythopoeic faculty of the human mind, though essentially loose and untrustworthy, is never creative, but requires some basis of fact to work upon"; the latter similarly that the myths always contain "real matter of fact along with mere conceptions." Grote responds that this may very well be; all that he asserts is that apart from extrinsic attestation we are without criteria for singling out the matters of fact. Robertson refers us to the criticism of Grote's position by Sir Alfred C. Lyall in his "Asiatic Studies," First Series, ed. 2, 1884, pp. 30 ff.; see also Second Series, 1899, pp. 324 ff. The difference between Grote and Lyall seems to reduce actually to something like this: Whether myths are ordinarily a specific product of imagination and feeling distinct in kind from both history and philosophy (as Grote contends), or concretions gathered around a nucleus of fact (as Lyall contends). In the former case they are fundamentally fictions and plausibility in their contents is no evidence of reality. In the latter, they are fundamentally history, however bad history, and the kernel of fact in them may be sought and conceivably found. The difference is, however, only relative; and the real crux is, as Grote insists, Granted that there is a kernel of truth in myths, how are we going to get at it? The Quarterly Reviewer confesses: "We pretend to no key by which we can extract the history from the legend" (p. 119) and Sir Alfred C. Lyall suggests none.

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Even when we have settled it well in our minds, however, that we have to do in the Gospel-narratives, not with a myth in which we may hope to find, perhaps, some relics of tradition, we have not yet escaped from misleading suggestions of the state of the case. Schmiedel is very eager to have it understood that the critical procedure he proposes is the common method of historians. "Every historical investigator," he tells us, therefore, in commending it to us,[74] "in what field soever he may be working, follows the principle of holding for true, in the first rank, in any account which testifies to reverence for its hero, that which runs counter to this reverence, since that cannot rest on invention." The broad generality of this representation is not, however, always retained. Sometimes the suggestion is rather that it is only when the historian makes his "first acquaintance with a historical person in a book which is throughout influenced by a feeling of worship for its hero, as the Gospels are by a feeling of worship for Jesus," that he places "in the first rank of credibility" those passages of the book which "run counter to this feeling."[75] Sometimes indeed, as in the primary statement,[76] we are carried into an even narrower sphere, and actually read: "When a profane historian finds before him a historical document which testifies to the worship of a hero unknown to other sources, he attaches first and foremost importance to those features which cannot be deduced merely from the fact of this worship, and he does so on the simple and sufficient ground that they would not be found in this source unless the author had met with them as fixed data of tradition." It is amazing to read here farther: "The same fundamental principle may safely be applied in the case of the Gospels, for they also are all of them written by worshippers of Jesus." We get further and further from the actual state of the case with the narratives of the Gospels, of course, as each of these limitations is added. Nobody first learns of Jesus from the Gospel-narratives. To suggest that Jesus is "unknown to other sources" than the Synoptic Gospels, or that these Gospels may be treated as if they were a single document, fairly attains the absurd. If an analogy to the critical method which Schmiedel recommends us to apply to the Gospels can be found in the practice of "every historical investigator" in the extra-theological field only in such dissimilar cases as are here indi-

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[73] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881, cf. Preface to Neumann, pp. vii, viii; "Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 14.

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[74] "Das vierte Evangelium," pp. 16–17.

[75] "Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 16 (German edition, p. 6).

[76] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1872.

cated, — why, then, there is no analogy. The appearance is very strong that Schmiedel, wishing to appeal to the example of secular historians in support of the critical method he is propounding, and finding among them no exact analogies, except in the very specific case which he alludes to, vacillates between simply claiming the example of secular historians in general, and assigning the case of the Gospel-narratives to the obviously unsuitable category in which he finds in practice the closest analogy to his proposed critical method.

The question having thus been raised it may be interesting to inquire what established methods of research are in use among historians in general which may be thought to present analogies more or less close with the manner of dealing with the Gospel-narratives proposed by Schmiedel. Anything like close analogies we shall, of course, find only among the methods which have been devised for ascertaining what may be regarded as trustworthy in generally untrustworthy accounts, or, to put it baldly, for eliciting the truth from the accounts of partizan writers. The fundamental presupposition of Schmiedel's criticism — as indeed of the whole "Liberal" criticism — is that we have to do in the historical tradition of Jesus with intensely partizan reports. The entire tradition is the product, in Schmiedel's phrase, of "worshippers of Jesus," and has consequently been cast in the moulds of their worship of Jesus; in the phrase of the common "Liberal" criticism it is the work of the primitive Christian community and reflects at every point the beliefs of that community. How, then, do the methodologists deal with bias? Ernst Bernheim describes the general procedure as follows: [77]

> "We must keep clearly in view with what particular circle an author has more or less personal relations, of what nation, of what station he is, whether he belongs to a particular political or confessional party, whether he is a one-sided patriot, whether he has had part in the determining of the events which he describes,

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[77] "Lehrbuch der historischen Methode und der Geschichtsphilosophie," 1908, p. 509; cf. pp. 485–486, 492–493.

whether he gives accounts of personal enemies or friends. In all these relations there can lie reasons, on the one side, for keeping silence as to, or smoothing over, what is obnoxious, for immoderately emphasizing and praising what is congenial; on the other side for ignoring what is meritorious and emphasizing what is obnoxious. The statements of a writer who is involved in such relations, cannot be taken as absolute matters of fact, without some testing, so far as they may be effected by these relations; and the old methodologists already emphasize strongly enough that a partizan writer deserves unqualified credit only when he relates what is good of his enemies, what is prejudicial of his friends, fellow-partizans, compatriots."

Accordingly, a little later, speaking of the possibility of extracting trustworthy facts out of an untrustworthy narrative he writes:[78]

"It is especially to be observed that there often meet us, in the midst of untrustworthy communications, statements which, precisely in these surroundings, we may hold to be unqualifiedly trustworthy: to wit, when an author who is governed by distinctly marked interests or tendencies, adduces facts, passes judgments, which stand in contradiction with his tendency, since he here involuntarily pays homage to the pure truth, and does not observe, or at least does not heed, the contradiction with his tendency, — as in the case of admissions of defeats, blunders, weaknesses of his own party, or on the other hand in the case of communication of victories, services, virtues of the enemy. The testimony of Lambert of Hersfeld, for example, must be taken as altogether trustworthy when, in involuntary recognition, he relates individual honorable traits of Henry IV, because Lambert is animated throughout by a strong enmity to the King. We can generalize this observation to the effect that statements in general, which have a content obnoxious for the communicator and his personal interests — obnoxious, that is to say, not according to our opinion, but in his own view — are thoroughly trustworthy; for, if it is already for most men difficult to communicate truths which are unfavorable to themselves and those associated with them, it runs entirely counter to human nature falsely to set itself in an unfavorable light."

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[78] P. 523–524.

To the important qualifying clause, " obnoxious, that is to say, not according to our opinion, but in his own view," Bernheim attaches a note which tells us that Charles Seignobos, " has rightly emphasized this," in the " Introduction to the Study of History " which he published in collaboration with Langlois.[79] In the passage referred to, Seignobos is pointing out the kinds of statements which, occurring in historical documents, authenticate themselves. Thus, for instance, he tells us,[80] *bona fides* at least may be inferred when the fact stated is " manifestly prejudicial to the effect which the author wished to produce." " In such a case," he remarks, " there is a probability of good faith." But we must take good care to reach our judgments in such matters from the point of view of the writer, not our own. " It is quite possible that the author's notions of his interest or honour were very different from ours." We need not accredit good faith to Charles IX, for example, when he acknowledged that he was responsible for the massacre of St. Bartholomew's day; to us that would be to confess an infamy, to him it was a boast of glory. There are even cases, Seignobos proceeds to intimate, in which more than *bona fides*, — in which truth itself, — may be inferred, viz. when " the fact was of such a nature, that it could not have been stated unless it were true." [81]

> " A man does not declare that he has seen something contrary to his expectations and habits of mind unless observation has compelled him to admit it. A fact which seems very improbable to the man who relates it has a good chance of being true. We have, then, to ask whether the fact stated was in contradiction to the author's opinions, whether it is a phenomenon of a kind unknown to him, an action or a custom which seems unintelligible to him; whether it is a saying whose import transcends his intelligence, such as the sayings of Christ reported in the Gospels, or the answers made by Joan of Arc to questions put to her in the course of her trial."

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[79] 1898, p. 188.

[80] " Introduction to the Study of History," E. T. 1898, p. 186.

[81] P. 188.

And then the caution is again added that in all such cases we must be very careful to judge according to the ideas of the author, not our own.

That the whole case may be before us we append an additional citation from another writer on general historical method. H. B. George remarks: [82]

> "If a particular writer is our only authority for this or that matter, concerning which his sentiments are obvious, it is inevitable that we should feel a tinge of prima facie suspicion that the facts may not be fairly represented. Our belief in his statement will not be quite so confident as if there were separate and independent testimony in support of it, but we have no ground for carrying our mistrust farther. In such a case, as continually when dealing with historical evidence, we must be content with something short of unhesitating assurance." "Internal criticism may indeed suggest that the author was a partisan, and our general knowledge that partisanship is liable to lead authors into misrepresenting facts may reasonably render us suspicious: but no merely internal indications could justify our totally disbelieving the author's specific statements on a matter concerning which, *ex hypothesi,* we have no evidence but his." "The most bigoted partisan may be giving a thoroughly true account of a transaction which is of special importance to the cause that he favors; the most credulous of writers may be telling a perfectly true story, even if it sounds improbable."

The principles of procedure outlined in passages like these are in general those which Schmiedel wishes to invoke in his criticism of the Gospel-narratives. We could almost conjecture that he wrote with the very words of Bernheim in his mind. Nevertheless a different spirit breathes in them from that which animates his procedure. And in attempting to apply such principles to the criticism of the Gospel-narratives, he has been misled into a number of violences in dealing with his material.

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In the first place, there is the flagrant absurdity, of which something has already been said, of suggesting that the Synoptic Gospels may be treated as the sole source of our knowledge of Jesus. The evidence, not merely of the existence of Jesus, but of the manner of man he was, quite independent of the Synoptic Gospels, is altogether exceptional, as well in consistency and contemporaneousness, as in sheer amount. This evidence culminates, of course, in the testimony of Paul, though it is by no means confined to his testimony. Schmiedel, it is true, minifies the testimony of Paul; but he cannot deny it, much less can he evacuate it. It only betrays the exigencies of his position when he permits himself to speak regarding it in such studiedly disparaging terms as these: [83]

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[82] "Historical Evidence," 1909, pp. 84, 96, 95.

> "If, as Dr. Neumann and the present writer believe, it is possible to show that the genuineness of these Epistles"—the major epistles of Paul—"is unassailable, and that the figure of Jesus cannot be projected back into a period earlier than the Christian era, we shall be justified in regarding the existence of Jesus as historically established. Only, by this we have gained exceedingly little for the construction of a Life of Jesus; the number of data supplied by Paul is but small." [84]
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> "With reference to the Epistles of the Apostle Paul, which no doubt unquestionably presuppose an actual Jesus, appeal can be made to the fact that according to many investigators they all came into being only in the second century. And if the composition of the most important of them be assigned to the years 50–60 A.D.,—which is my view also—nevertheless it must be acknowledged that they relate deplorably little about Jesus, and do not in the least afford a guarantee for all that is commonly regarded as credible about him from the first three Gospels." [85]

Schmiedel

If it be borne in mind that the question at issue does not concern the details of the daily life of Jesus, but His very existence and the manner of person He was, the unhappy art of these statements will be apparent. Much more justly Heinrich Weinel not only tells us that Paul's letters "contain so much about Jesus that he is our best and surest witness in the controversy that has just been started afresh about the historicity of the person of Jesus," and that, however few references he makes to events in His life, Paul has yet "preserved the picture of Jesus for us very clearly and distinctly,"[86] but, addressing himself to the precise point now engaging our attention, says plainly:[87]

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[83] Cf. "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881.

[84] Preface to Neumann, p. viii.

[85] "Die Person Jesu, etc.," p. 6; E. T. "Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 14.

> "The critical theology has continually emphasized how little we learn of Jesus from Paul. I too myself have formerly placed the matter in this false light. What Paul gives us of Jesus and His words is little, if we measure it by the standard of a Gospel; it is little too if we demand that a Paul shall buttress all his ideas with declarations of Jesus. It is, however, not merely enough to find the existence of Jesus attested in the Epistles of Paul; rather in all important matters the echoes of Jesus' sayings are heard in Paul, and there is not only a whole multitude of details which Paul knows and transmits, but also all the distinguishing traits of the preaching of Jesus and His nature are preserved to us by Paul. There is therefore a great deal, if we do not carry the old prejudice with us to these Epistles which are after all occasional writings and are not written with the express design of informing us of Jesus."

Even Schmiedel's own pupil, Arno Neumann, indeed, rebukes the madness of his teacher, when, in the Introduction to the little Life of Jesus, to the English translation of which Schmiedel contributed a Preface, coming to speak of Paul's testimony to Jesus, he tells us that to give any scientific character to the denial of Jesus' existence, we must first push incontinently out of the path that "historical Rock whose name is Paul." By Paul, the genuineness of whose chief Epistles is indubitable, he adds:[88]

> "there are accredited not only the manifestations (*Auftreten*) of Jesus Christ in general, His epoch, the peculiarity of His character, and His death, but also some of His fundamental ideas, His twelve disciples, and the remarkable impression He must have made,"—

in a word, the entire fact and figure of Jesus. But that the force of Paul's testimony may be fully appreciated it must be

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[86] "St. Paul, the Man and his Work," E. T. 1906, pp. 316, 321: the whole passage should be read.

[87] "Ist das 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, p. 16.

[88] "Jesus, wer er geschichtlich war," 1904, pp. 10–11; E. T. pp. 4–5.

kept in mind that it is original testimony, properly so-called contemporaneous testimony.[89] Paul, it is true, was not himself a companion of Jesus; but he connected himself with the Christian movement in its very earliest days, lived in constant communication with Jesus' immediate disciples, enjoyed the fullest opportunity to learn at first hand all they knew, and wrote under their eye.[90] In a true sense his testimony is theirs; he is in it their mouthpiece; and it is accordingly supported in all its extent by every line of tradition which comes down from them.[91]

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The absurdity of treating the Synoptic Gospels as the sole source of our knowledge of Jesus is fairly matched by the absurdity of attempting to treat them as together constituting but a single source of that knowledge, and that a source of the value of which we are ignorant. Schmiedel warns us not to imagine that a narrative which is found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels comes to us therefore accredited by three witnesses; for he says that all are drawing from one source.[92] But he does not take the same trouble to warn us that this one source lies, therefore, distinctly nearer to the events it narrates than any of the three Gospels that have drawn from it; or that the circumstance that they have all drawn so largely from it accredits it as a very excellent source, everywhere depended upon in its own day; or, even, that it is not the only source from which these Gospels draw, — that by its side lies another source, certainly equal in age and value to it, from which two of them at least draw, and by their side lie still other sources from which one or another of them draws, which need not be inferior in either age or value to either of them. If we are to break up the Gospels into their sources and appeal rather to these sources than to the Gospels themselves (which is not the method of procedure which Schmiedel is in act to commend to us, presenting his critical method rather as independent of literary criticism) we do not lose but profit by the process. Instead of three witnesses of about the seventh decade of the century we have now in view quite a number of witnesses, all earlier than the seventh decade of the century, some of them perhaps very much earlier; and all commended to our favorable consideration by their selection as trustworthy sources of information concerning Jesus by writers so earnest and careful as the authors of the Synoptic Gospels, and by the remarkable completeness of their harmony with one another in the portrait of Jesus which they draw, a harmony which extends also to the portrait of Jesus given us by Paul and by all other witnesses which we may be willing to accept as coming to us from the same general period. No fault in the historical criticism of the Gospel narratives could be more gross than the obscuring of the existence or of the impressiveness of this consistent tradition concerning Jesus, stretching back of the Synoptic Gospels to the very beginning of the Christian movement. And nothing requires to be more strongly emphasized than that it is just because of the impressive consent of the whole tradition of Jesus, running back of the Synoptic Gospels to the beginning, that critics whose presuppositions will not permit them to accept this tradition as trustworthy appeal from literary criticism to historical criticism in an endeavor to get behind the consistent tradition to a Jesus unknown to it. The Synoptic Gospels come before us, meanwhile, not as new phenomena relatively to the portrait of Jesus which they embody, but distinctly as merely the bearers of a tradition of the richest and most consistent sort, which from all that appears is aboriginal; in a word, as witnesses of really contemporaneous value to the Jesus who was known by those who companied with Him and could give first-hand information about Him. This great fact is obscured by Schmiedel, by suggesting unreasonably late dates for the composition of the Synoptic Gospels, thus lengthening unwarrantably the interval which separates them from the facts which they narrate; by leaving in the background the richness and trustworthiness of the tradition which bridges this interval; by treating the Synoptic Gospels as "flying leaves" of wholly unknown provenience and value; and by dealing with them as if they were a single unsupported document.

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[89] "Original authorities," according to Bernheim (pp. 413–507), are *strictly* only actual eye-and-ear-witnesses of what is narrated. But as even these must fill out what they relate from the testimony of others, it is usual to widen the notion and to call "contemporary accounts which rest on their own immediate perception and on that of other contemporaries" "original authorities." This is reasonable. On the other hand, E. A. Freeman ("The Methods of Historical Study," 1886, p. 168) unduly extends the notion when he accords the name of "original authorities" to derived accounts in case the original sources are lost. To deserve the name of "original authorities" the element of contemporaneousness must not be wholly lacking.

[90] Accordingly Neumann adds (p. 11; E. T. p. 5): "It is accordingly no impairment of the value of Paul as reporter that he never personally saw Jesus; for certainly there was nothing left lacking to this new convert of the most eager inquiries (I Cor. xi. 23; vii. 10 ff.; II Cor. x. 1; viii. 9, etc.)."

[91] Out of the immense literature of the subject, cf. especially: R. J. Knowling, "The Testimony of St. Paul to Christ," 1905; Th. Zahn, "Einleitung in das N. T.,"[1] ii. pp. 164 ff. (ix. § 48, Anmerkungen 4, 5); R. Drescher, "Das Leben Jesu bei Paulus," 1900; H. J. Holtzmann, in "Die Christliche Welt," xxiv. (1910), coll. 151–160; A. J. Mason, Essays on Some Theological Questions of the Day by Members of the University of Cambridge, edited by H. B. Swete, 1905, pp. 425 ff.; J. G. Machen, "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary," 1912, pp. 561 ff.

[92] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1872.

It must not be supposed that Schmiedel speaks dogmatically upon all these matters. That is not his ordinary manner. The whole drift of his reasoning is towards a late date for the Gospels; he seems indeed to wish to cluster them in the last few years of the century.[93] But he is careful to guard his readers against supposing that it would affect his estimate of the value of their contents if they should turn out to be earlier. He says: [94]

> "The chronological question is in this instance a very subordinate one. Indeed, even if our Gospels could be shown to have been written from 50 A.D. onwards, or even earlier, we should not be under any necessity to withdraw our conclusions as to their contents; we should, on the contrary, only have to say that the indubitable transformation in the original tradition had taken place much more rapidly than one might have been ready to suppose. The

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[93] Otto Schmiedel, who may possibly consider himself the follower of his brother in this matter, gives more distinctly the following dates: Mark, A.D. 80; Matthew 90, with reworking up to 120 or even later; Luke, 100.

[94] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1894.

credibility of the Gospel history cannot be established by an earlier dating of the Gospels themselves in any higher degree than that in which it has been shown to exist, especially as we know that even in the lifetime of Jesus miracles of every sort were attributed to him in the most confident manner. But as the transformation has departed so far from the genuine tradition, it is only in the interest of a better understanding and of a more reasonable appreciation of the process that one should claim for its working out a considerable period of time."

On the peculiarities of the reasoning of this paragraph we do not feel called upon to comment. Each sentence seems to neutralize its immediate neighbors. But in any event few will be found to agree with Schmiedel that it will make no difference in our estimate of the credibility of the Gospels whether we place their own composition about A.D. 100, and that of their chief sources about 70; or their own composition somewhere around 50, and that of their chief sources — shall we say about 40 or 35, or even earlier? To assert otherwise is indeed to deny a fundamental canon of criticism. For it is quite obvious that if our Gospels were composed from 50 to 70 (it is our own belief that they were composed in the sixties) and rest on sources, to a considerable extent recoverable from them, which come from a period ten or twenty years — or more — earlier, we possess in them in effect contemporaneous testimony. And contemporaneous testimony of such mass and constancy cannot be lightly neglected. It is not easy to believe in a transformation so great as that which is assumed, taking place so rapidly as in this case it must have done; though, of course, this will not appear formidable to Schmiedel who allows that Jesus was looked upon as a supernatural person even in His lifetime, thus admitting in effect that it is not a question of transformation with which we are concerned but a question of the credibility of contemporaneous testimony. From our point of view, at any rate, it is not a matter of indifference whether the Gospels are dated near 100 A.D., or between 50 and 70, and we therefore think it worth while to insist that there is really no reason for

Date 50-70 A

Sources 35-50 A

removing any of them to a time later than A.D. 70, as even a Harnack has (somewhat tardily) come to see.[95]

No more than the early dates of the Gospels does Schmiedel dogmatically deny the richness of the tradition that lies behind them. He even elsewhere fully recognizes it, investigating with great diligence the sources of the sources and intimating the far-reaching consequences which the recognition of them has upon the literary criticism of the Gospels.[96] But when he comes to consider the credibility of the Gospel narratives he ignores altogether the fulness and constancy of this historical tradition of which they are merely the vehicles. We do not forget that this is in accord with his professed procedure; that precisely what he proposes to do is to turn away from literary criticism and to seek to reach a decision upon the credibility of the narratives by a historical criticism which, wholly independently of literary criticism, works directly upon the transmitted material itself without consideration of the modes or channels of its transmission. But precisely what we are complaining of is the impropriety of this method. It is in essence an attempt to ignore a fundamental fact, the fact, that is, that the Synoptic Gospels do not stand off in isolation, and cannot be dealt with as if they were, — or even as if they were only possibly — a body of inventions; but are known to rest on a background of copious, consentient and contemporary historical tradition. To lose sight of this fact is to lose sight of the primary fact in the case, and to do violence to the fundamental law of evidence which demands that well-attested facts shall not be treated as unattested facts. What Schmiedel asks of us is to begin our investigation into the credibility of the Synoptic Gospels by abstracting our attention from the primary evidence of their credibility, viz., that they are but vehicles of a copious and unbroken historical tradition which is contemporaneous with the facts which it transmits. Having failed to shake this testimony by literary criticism he proposes — not to allow it its due weight but — to neglect it and direct his assault upon the credibility of the Gospel-narratives to another point!

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[95] Cf. W. P. Armstrong, in "Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary," 1912, pp. 348–349: "With the increasing recognition of the evidence for the early date of the Synoptic Gospels, their sources — of whatever kind and constitution — being still earlier — carry back the witness of the documents to the time of the eye-witnesses. And among these there was no difference of opinion concerning the factual basis which underlies the tradition recorded by the Gospels in concrete and varying forms. To admit with Harnack that the Gospel of Luke was written before 70 A.D. and early in the sixties ("Neue Untersuchungen zur Apostelgeschichte," pp. 81 ff.), is to accept a fact which has an important bearing on the origin of the sources of the Synoptic Gospels, — a fact which makes it difficult, as Harnack himself foresaw ("Die Apostelgeschichte," p. 221, note 2), to regard as legendary their account of supernatural events. For if the Gospels embody the view of Jesus which was current in the primitive Christian community about 60 A.D. — as Heitmüller admits — or earlier — as Harnack's dating of Luke requires — the rejection of their witness cannot be based upon their differences or upon purely historical considerations. Recourse must be had to a principle springing ultimately out of philosophical conceptions by which their unanimous witness to essential features in their portraiture of Jesus may be set aside." Cf. also the accompanying note 180.

[96] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," coll. 1862 ff., §§ 128–129.

It is part of this studied disregard of the real conditions of the case, that Schmiedel treats the Synoptic Gospels as documents of entirely unknown provenience and value. Here indeed he becomes even dogmatic. He is quite sure that the Third Gospel, for example, is not the production of Paul's companion, Luke, although he is equally sure that this Gospel and the Book of Acts are from the same pen; [97] he will not concede to Luke even the "we"-sections of Acts, which he considers to come from a different hand from the rest of the book. We take it, however, that — as even a Harnack again has come to perceive [98] — a sober criticism must allow that Acts is all of a piece — "we"-passages and all — and Acts and the Third Gospel are from the same hand, and this hand is that to which a constant historical tradition has from the earliest times ascribed both books, — that of Luke. This being so, the Gospel of Luke is entitled to the credit which belongs to a book by a known author, of known opportunities to inform himself of the subject-matter of which he treats, and of known will and capacity to treat that subject-matter worthily. Luke is known to have been an educated physician, who as a companion of Paul's was exceptionally favorably situated for learning the facts concerning Jesus. Whatever Paul knew, he knew. Whatever was known by other companions of Paul's into contact with whom he came, some of whom (as for example John Mark) had come out of the circle of Jesus' immediate disciples, he knew. He even visited Jerusalem in company with Paul; and resided with him for two years at Caesarea in touch with primitive disciples. What such a writer has given us concerning Jesus, set down in such an obviously painstaking narrative, — especially when it proves to be wholly at one with what is given us by Paul, as well as by his fellow evangelists in equally painstaking narratives, and indeed with the whole previous tradition so far as that tradition can be penetrated, — cannot be treated simply as floating reports.[99]

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[97] *Ibid.*, col. 1893.

[98] See especially numbers i., iii., and iv. of Harnack's "New Testament Studies" (Crown Theological Library, xx., xxvii., xxxiii.); "Luke the Physician," 1907; "The Acts of the Apostles," 1909; "The Date of the Acts and of the Synoptic Gospels," 1911.

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[99] It may conduce to a better understanding of the trustworthiness of Luke as a biographer if we will look at it in the light of an analogous case. Why is not Luke's relation to the subjects he deals with in his Gospel much the same as that of, say, Mr. Clement R. Shorter to the Brontës? Mr. Shorter did not know the Brontës. But he has diligently sought out the facts from those who knew them, and from those who have described them at first hand. His title page very fairly parallels Luke's prologue: "The Brontës: Life and Letters. Being an attempt to present a full and final record of the lives of the three sisters, Charlotte, Emily and Anne Brontë, from the Biographies of Mrs. Gaskell and others, and from numerous hitherto unpublished Manuscripts and Letters." That is not far from the way Luke might have phrased his title page: "Jesus Christ: Life and Teachings. Being an attempt to present a trustworthy record of His life from the biographies which have been published of Him, and from hitherto unpublished recollections communicated by those who knew Him." Of course, this is second-hand biography; Luke, like Mr. Shorter, belongs to the second generation. But, like Mr. Shorter, he enjoyed exceptional opportunities to learn the truth, and exhibits exceptional zeal in ascertaining and recording the truth of the matters with which he deals. In the circumstances in which he wrote the trustworthiness of his communications, and particularly of the general portraiture he gives of Jesus, is not lessened, — it is perhaps even enhanced — by his secondariness. Mrs. Gaskell's "Life of Charlotte Brontë" cannot be superseded; but Mr. Shorter's account is not inferior in trustworthiness to it. The sources from which Luke drew are, of course, more original

With elements of the actual state of the case like these clearly in mind, we shall know what estimate to place on the extremely sceptical attitude which Schmiedel takes up with reference to the Synoptic narratives. He does not approach them with the deference due to an exceptionally well-attested historical tradition, but with an already active assumption of their untrustworthiness, in the portrait of Jesus which they transmit. Of this assumption no justification is possible and none is attempted. We cannot rank as such the pages in which there are accumulated elements in the Synoptic narratives "which for any reason arising either from the substance or from considerations of literary criticism" seem to Schmiedel "doubtful or wrong;" [100] and which he closes with the words: "The foregoing sections may have sometimes seemed to raise a doubt whether any credible elements were to be found in the gospels at all." [101] But these sections register the effects, not the cause, of the scepticism with which Schmiedel approaches the Synoptic narratives and form a body of what is little better than special pleading. Nowhere are the Synoptic narratives given the benefit of the presumption which lies in their favor; that is to say, nowhere is any consideration shown to the weight of the historical tradition of which they are but the vehicles, and which confessedly stretches back to the very beginning of the Christian movement. The one aim of all his criticism is to set aside this tradition; the principle he invokes is that of con-

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than his own narrative; but his narrative resting on these written sources, supplemented by his own inquiries, does not yield in trustworthiness to them. It is, in fact, just these sources themselves, tested and supplemented by competent inquiry in original quarters, and these sources do not lose but increase in value by being incorporated in such a work as Luke's. By all means let us go back to the Narrative-Source, and to the Discourse-Source, and to any other sources we can identify, so far as we can isolate them; but let us not fancy that out of Luke they are more trustworthy than they are in Luke, or that the cement in which Luke imbeds them is less trustworthy than they are — this cement itself is from original sources. It is not merely what Mr. Shorter repeats from Mrs. Gaskell or other formal biographies which is worthy of credit in his book.

[100] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," coll. 1872, 1873–1881; §§ 132–138.

[101] *Ibid.*, col. 1881.

tradiction; and the effect of his criticism is to substitute for the portrait of Jesus handed down by the entire tradition a new portrait related to it as its precise opposite.[102]

It is needless to say that in this extreme scepticism as over against the whole historic tradition Schmiedel receives no encouragement whatever from the general practice of historians. We have only to glance over even the brief extracts we have cited [103] from the methodologists to perceive in how different a spirit historians are accustomed to approach their task. The attitude they commend to us is one of general deference to positive testimony; and if they point out conditions which in particular instances may rightly modify this deference or even neutralize it, and indicate methods of procedure by which, when suspicion is justified, the more trustworthy elements of a tradition may be sifted out, they never suggest an attitude of general scepticism as over against positive testimony; they even expressly deny the propriety of altogether rejecting positive testimony on merely internal grounds. The whole tendency of the recommendations of the methodologists is towards respect to positive testimony, and they test it with a view rather to discovering what we can most completely trust than with a view to disregarding it in principle. Schmiedel, on the contrary, begins with the rejection of the tradition in principle although it is exceptionally copiously and harmoniously attested; and sets himself to seek in it not the most trustworthy elements in a generally trustworthy tradition, on the basis of which the whole positive testimony may be given its rightful coloring and validity; but encysted elements of an underlying truth in contradiction to the whole testimony, on the basis of which he can reverse the tradition and recover the lost truth submerged by it. For a procedure of this sort, applied to a historical tradition such as that embodied in the Synoptic

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[102] Johannes Weiss, "Jesus von Nazareth, etc.," 1910, pp. 84–85 has some wise words on "the really morbid scepticism" which is too often permitted by modern critics (his example is Wrede) to intrude between the source and the reader.

[103] See above pp. 220–223.

Gospels, supported as that tradition is by a wealth of extraneous testimony such for example as that of Paul, and traceable as it is back to contemporary sources, it is safe to say no support can be found in the recognized practice of secular historians. It is in fact not a historical procedure which is proposed at all; it is pure anti-historism — a bold attempt to pour history into the mould of *a priori* construction. Against such a procedure the methodologists protest with all their strength. No one has less their respect than the critic who — as Bouché-Leclercq expresses it — "after having discredited all his witnesses, claims to put himself in their place, and sees with their eyes something quite different from what they saw." [104] "The one thing which is illegitimate for criticism," remarks H. B. George,[105] "is to assume that it can divine the truth underlying the existing narrative, which it declares to be more or less fabulous." [106]

Certainly it will be admitted that if a historical tradition like that transmitted to us in the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels is to be reversed on the faith of fragments of a rival tradition which, if not older (for there can scarcely be a tradition older than that which confessedly was shared by the immediate disciples of Jesus) is yet truer, imbedded in it like flies in amber, then these fragments of the truer tradition must authenticate themselves with absolute certainty as quite irreconcilable with the tradition which is to be replaced by them. Schmiedel, in point of fact, does not fail to claim this absolute contrariety with the tradition in which they are imbedded for his "pillar-passages." It is because he finds imbedded in the Synoptic narrative occasional statements which run absolutely counter to it in its fundamental tendency, and therefore cannot owe their origin to the invention of those to whom this narrative (immediately or ultimately) is due, that he feels able to point to them as fragments of an underlying truer tradition which would have perished save for the vitality of these fragments. They were too firmly established in the minds of the followers of Jesus to be passed by; and have therefore been taken up into the growing legend to preserve the memory of the real Jesus, which it was obliterating. When we come to scrutinize these relics of truer recollection, however, we are surprised to note how little they are able to bear the burden of the argument which is erected upon them. Schmiedel selects nine of them for special remark. He intimates that these are by no means all that might be gathered out of the fabric of the narrative.[107] But it lies in the nature of the case that they are fairly representative of the whole body; and indeed that they present the clearest and most convincing instances of the phenomenon adverted to. Schmiedel himself divides them into two categories. Five of them, he tells us, " throw light on Jesus' figure as a whole "; the other four " have a special bearing on His character as a worker of wonders." [108] To speak more plainly the five former of them are supposed to stand in irreconcilable contradiction with the deification of Jesus which had grown up in the Christian community; the latter four are supposed to stand in equally irreconcilable contradiction with the ascription of miracles in the strict sense to Jesus, which had also become the custom of the Christian community. On the basis of the former five Schmiedel thinks that we are entitled to assert that Jesus was originally fully understood by His followers to be merely a human being; on the basis of the latter four that He was equally fully understood by His followers originally to be a wholly non-miraculous man. The two classes of statements together make it clear that Jesus was not at first the object of worship by His followers: they are " not consistent with the worship in which Jesus had come to be held"; they "are appropriate only to a man, and could never by any possibility have been written had the author been thinking of a demi-god."[109]

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[104] Quoted by Seignobos, in Langlois and Seignobos, "Introduction to the Study of History," 1898, pp. 158–159, note 2.

[105] "Historical Evidence," 1909, p. 69. He adds: "It may put forward guesses, and they may seem probable: but nothing can transform them into ascertained facts."

[106] F. J. A. Hort long ago warned us that "criticism is not dangerous except when, as in so much Christian criticism, it is merely the tool for reaching a result not itself believed in on that ground but on the ground of speculative postulates" ("Hulsean Lectures for 1871," 1908, p. 177).

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[107] See e.g., Preface to Neumann, p. xiii.

[108] " Die Person Jesu, etc.," p. 7. E. T. p. 18.

Now, the singular thing is that some of the "pillar-passages," at least, even with the meaning which Schmiedel puts upon them, do not obviously have the directly contradictory bearing upon the attribution of deity or of the possession of supernatural powers to Jesus, which is ascribed to them, and which is required of them if they are to serve the function put upon them. It is not immediately apparent, for example, that the statement in Mk. iii. 21 to the effect "that his relations held him to be beside himself"[110] contradicts the attribution of deity to Jesus. Why must a divine Jesus be supposed to have been fully understood "in the days of his flesh," even by those nearest to Him? Or, for the matter of that, why should not worshippers of Jesus even invent such a statement? "As if," exclaims Friedrich Steudel,[111] with considerable force, "a poet would depreciate his hero, by representing him as one who was misunderstood in his closest surroundings!" As if, in a word, the tendency of such an incident as is here recorded might not easily be, — on the supposition that it is part and parcel of a mythical account of a divine being for a time on earth — precisely to show His greatness by representing that not only did His enemies accuse Him of working wonders by the power of the Evil One, but His very friends thought Him mad. And certainly Schmiedel himself must have felt some difficulty in including among his "pillar-passages" Mk. xiii. 32 (cf. Mt. xxiv. 36),[112] in which, if Jesus is made to confess that there was at least one thing He did not know, He is at the same time made to range Himself in dignity of being above the angels — and on the side of God in contrast with even the highest of creatures. Upon others of the "pillar-passages" a most unnatural meaning has to be imposed before they can be thought of in that connection. For example, in the narrative connected with Jesus' warning of His disciples to beware of "the leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod" (Mk. viii. 15, cf. Mt. xvi. 6), it is only by the most sinuous exegesis that we arrive at the conclusion that the miracles of the feeding of the five thousand and the four thousand (both of which are narrated both by Matthew and by Mark) are only "transformed parables" — though even if they were, that fact would scarcely prove that Jesus never wrought miracles. So, it is not a natural interpretation which reduces Jesus' enumeration of His miraculous works in reply to the inquiry of John the Baptist's message (Mt. xi. 5, Lk. vii. 22) to a series of figurative statements which mean only that He was exercising notable spiritual power among the people — though again, even were that the true interpretation, it would scarcely prove that Jesus wrought no miracles. At the most, it would suggest that He laid greater stress on His spiritual than on His physical miracles; and surely that is obvious enough in any case. It is unreasonable, further, to insist on an interpretation of Jesus' refusal to give a "sign" (Mk. viii. 12 cf. Mt. xvi. 4, and further Mt. xii. 39, Lk. xi. 29) which makes it a categorical declaration on Jesus' part that He would work in no circumstances any sort of miracle, and therefore a confession by Him that He could work no miracle. The context suggests a very different interpretation, and Schmiedel himself is free elsewhere to point out a distinction between miracles as such and miracles as "signs."[113] Similarly, it is an unreasonable interpretation of Jesus' inability to work miracles at Nazareth (Mk. vi. 5: "He could there do no mighty work") to make it teach that it was never He that worked miracles, but the people themselves by the ardor of their faith; and to infer from this that the real Jesus wrought no other wonders than "faith cures."[114] The narrative itself includes in the broader category of "mighty works," as of like supernatural character with them, these "faith cures" (if we insist on describing them by this name) which He worked also at Nazareth; attributes these "mighty works" to Him as ordinary acts;[115] and leaves no other interpretation possible than that His "inability" to work these mighty works at Nazareth was a moral and not a natural "inability"; it was unsuitable for Him to do so.[116] Even were it otherwise it still would not be clear why a limitation upon Jesus' power to work miracles imposed by unbelief should argue a general inability in Him to work miracles. Precisely what Jesus meant to imply when He declared that speaking against His person might be forgiven, while blasphemy against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven (Mt. xii. 31) may be an open question.[117] But it is not obvious that He must have meant that His person was inferior in dignity to that of the Holy Spirit, as Schmiedel assumes;[118] and if He did, it is not obvious that this implies a self-confession of His mere humanity. It may be plausible to argue that He refuses the address "Good Master" (Mk. x. 17) and in doing so spoke out of a human consciousness; but this interpretation of the passage is by no means to be accepted as certain, or even probable, — or, we might justly add, even possible.[119] The cry of dereliction on the cross (Mk. xv. 34) certainly seems the expression of a human consciousness, though why of a merely human consciousness does not appear.[120] If then recognition of Jesus as human is equivalent to denying Him to be divine, there is a single passage among Schmiedel's nine which clearly contradicts the ascription of deity to Jesus: and others of them may, no doubt, be put forward with more or less plausibility in the same interest, if we are set upon making out an argument *vi et armis*. But to advance these passages as definitely inconsistent with the attribution of deity or miracles to Jesus, so inconsistent that they must be recognized as remnants of a truer tradition of a merely human, non-miraculous Jesus, and able to bear the weight of a structure which must supersede the portrait of the divine, miraculous Jesus drawn in the Synoptic tradition, and in all other extant tradition, can strike us as nothing but a counsel of despair.

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[109] Preface to Neumann, p. xvii.

[110] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1881; cf. "Das vierte Evangelium," p. 18.

[111] P. 89.

[112] See "Das vierte Evangelium," p. 22.

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[113] *Ibid.*, pp. 15 ff.

[114] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," §§ 141, 144; e.g., col. 1885: "It is quite permissible for us to regard as historical only those of the class which even at the present day physicians are able to effect by psychical methods . . ."; "Jesus in Modern Criticism," pp. 19 f. The same conclusion is reached on the same grounds by W. Heitmüller, Schiele and Zscharnack's "Die Religion, etc.," iii. 1912, col. 372.

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[115] Mk. vi. 2, 5: "Whence hath this man these things — and what mean such mighty works wrought by His hands?" "And He could there do no mighty work save that He laid His hands upon a few sick folk, and healed them."

[116] Cf. H. R. Mackintosh, "The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," 1912, p. 14: "The verdict passed on Nazareth to the effect that, owing to the unbelief He encountered there, Jesus could work no miracle (Mk. vi. 5), has often been misconstrued. The meaning is not that the people's mistrust deprived Him of Messianic power; it is rather that the ethical conditions of reception being absent, a moral impossibility existed that He should put His power in active operation."

[117] W. Lütgert, "Die Liebe im N. T.," 1905, p. 99, wishes to explain the passage from the general principle that Jesus' anger burns against offenses against God, never against offenses against Himself: "The same simple rule lies at the bottom of the declaration about the blasphemy of the Spirit. What is spoken against the Son of Man. that is, against Him personally, Jesus pardons; what on the other hand is spoken against the Spirit, that is, against God, — that is unpardonable."

[118] "Das vierte Evangelium," p. 33. Cf. the good reply of Karl Thieme, "Die christliche Demut," i. 1906, p. 139, who says that the clause "and whosoever shall say a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him" here has the same effect as the clause "nor yet the Son" in xxiv. 26, and is "less an offensive minification than a great glorification of Jesus."

A further consideration, which has already been hinted at in passing, requires emphasizing at this point. W. B. Smith has urged with some persistency that if these "pillar-passages" are really inconsistent with the Synoptic tradition, the writers of the Synoptic Gospels are strangely unaware of it. That the Synoptic Gospels record these statements must, he thinks, at least be recognized as evidence that their asserted inconsistency with the fundamental tendency of the Synoptic Gospels is imaginary. And then Smith adds with force: [121]

> "They may seem to *us* what they will; in the view of the authors of the Gospels, who were worshippers of Jesus, they cer-

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[119] Cf. what Karl Thieme has to say, as cited, pp. 106 ff.

[120] Schmiedel himself will not admit that it was a cry of *despair* ("Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 50).

[121] "Ecce Deus, etc." (German edit.), p. 179. Cf. the summary on p. 181: "I permit myself to repeat: The mere fact that a declaration or an act is ascribed to Jesus by the author of a Gospel is a positive proof that it did not stand in conscious contradiction to the conception of Jesus held by that author; and it is moreover not probable that an unconscious contradiction is present, for these Gospels are very unusually well thought-out works. . . ."

tainly were *not* incompatible with that worship. The ground of this contention is obvious. Had these passages been felt as irreconcilable with worship of Jesus, with the cult of Jesus as a God, they would have been altered, and their disharmony corrected."

It is easy, no doubt, to rejoin that it is by no means inconceivable or even unexampled that inconsistent elements of fact should be preserved in a growing legend; this is, as Bernheim expresses it,[122] the homage which legend pays to truth, and it may easily occur without consciousness, or at least clear consciousness, of it on the part of the writer. As to the harmonizing of these statements with the legend, why, is it not part of Schmiedel's contention that this is precisely what was done, and that we can trace the process in the Synoptic record itself? [123] This rejoinder scarcely, however, meets the objection. The Synoptic Gospels are not simply sections of a growing legend, gradually working its way to the consistent presentation of a germinal conception. They are, each of them, the careful composition of a thoughtful, alert writer alive to his purposes to his finger-tips. And the method by which the supposed progressive harmonization of the incongruous elements of truth with the demands of the legend is detected, is one of extreme untrustworthiness, in the conclusions of which, to speak frankly, no dependence whatever can be placed. The general canon which governs it is justly challenged as without foundation in fact; [124] and the processes by which under this general canon findings are reached in individual cases are fatally mechanical and confessedly capable of making out an equally plausible case for any finding desired.[125] After all said, we must revert to the fundamental canon of all criticism of this order, emphasized as such by all the methodologists.[126] We must not impute ourselves to the writers we are criticising, but must judge of alleged contradictions occurring in their narratives not from our own point of view but from theirs. We cannot avoid raising the question, therefore, whether the statements declared in Schmiedel's "pillar-passages" to be inconsistent with the historical tradition embodied in the Synoptic narratives merely seem to us incompatible with the fundamental tendency of that tradition, or are such as must have been felt by the authors of the Synoptic Gospels themselves to be contradictory to their fundamental conception of Jesus. In the former case we may perhaps be in a position to pronounce the legend of Jesus, as presented in the Synoptic Gospels, not quite self-consistent; that is our own affair and concerns only our personal attitude towards the figure of Jesus. It is only in the latter case that we should be in a position to point to such passages as evidence of the existence of a better tradition underlying the Synoptic tradition on the basis of which the latter should be corrected. When this only relevant question is fairly faced it is by no means impertinent to point out that if the statements of the "pillar-passages" are really inconsistent with the historical tradition embodied in the Synoptic Gospels,

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[122] "Lehrbuch der historischen Methode, etc.," p. 523 (see above pp. 220–222).

[123] Preface to Neumann, p. xi.: "I, of set purpose, selected only those passages in which it is possible to show from the text of the Gospels themselves that they are incompatible with the worship in which Jesus came to be held. Thus, they are, all of them, found only in one Gospel, or at most in two; the second and third, or the third, either omits the passage in question, although, by universal consent, the author who omits must have known at least one of the Gospels in which it occurs, or the source from which it was drawn; or, alternatively, he turns it round, often with great ingenuity and boldness, in such a manner that it loses the element which makes it open to exception from the point of view of a worshipper of Jesus." Cf. "Jesus in Modern Criticism," p. 16; "Das vierte Evangelium," p. 17; "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1872.

[124] Thus, for example, Franz Dibelius, "Das Abendmahl," 1911, remarks

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that the canon of literary criticism, which is uniformly followed, runs: "Where there are differing accounts, that one deserves the most credit which is the simplest, that is, commonly, which is the briefest; where important elements of the one are lacking in another, they are later, interpolated additions" (p. 2); and then he criticises its validity sharply (p. 7).

[125] Schmiedel himself remarks ("Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1846) that "every assertion, no matter how evident, as to the priority of one evangelist and the posteriority of another in any given passage will be found to have been turned the other way round by quite a number of scholars of repute. . . ."

[126] Cf. Bernheim above, p. 222; Langlois and Seignobos, *op. cit.*, pp. 165–166.

it is strange that these Gospels are so completely unconscious of it.

In point of fact the argument based on the "pillar-passages" has been pushed through with very little consideration for the point of view of the Synoptic Gospels, or of the historical tradition they represent. It has been made to run much as follows. The Synoptic Gospels represent a tradition in which worship of Jesus is the dominating feature: they make it their business to present before adoring eyes the figure of a divine, miraculous Jesus: but we find embedded in their narrative statements which present to us the figure of a human Jesus, a Jesus with the limitations that belong to a man: these statements must be as yet unassimilated fragments of a truer tradition: otherwise their presence in this tradition of a divine Jesus would be unaccountable: we must, therefore, base our conception of the real Jesus on these unassimilated fragments, and reject all in the tradition embodied in these Gospels which is inconsistent with them. The underlying assumption is that Jesus must have been either divine or human; so that the discovery of a Jesus who was human abolishes the legend of a Jesus who was divine. The question is never once raised whether, in the sense of the Synoptic tradition, Jesus might not have been both divine and human. If that question were raised and answered in the affirmative, then the inconsistency with the Synoptic tradition of the statements alleged to be found in the "pillar-passages" would at once vanish, and the whole argument founded on it evaporate. At best it would remain only a new mode of putting the common "Liberal" procedure of setting over against one another the divine and human traits ascribed to Jesus in the Gospels and, on the assumption that both cannot be true, choosing the human and rejecting the divine.[127] Its only advantage over the ordinary presentation of that argument would be in its concentration of the evidence of a human Jesus into

[illegible] heresy

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[127] Thus, for example, Johannes Weiss ("Jesus von Nazareth," pp. 132–133) enumerates first the divine traits attributed to Jesus in Mark, and then the human traits — and concludes that the divine traits belong to the Jesus of legend and the human to the Jesus of fact. See *The American Journal of Theology,* xv. (1911) pp. 553–555.

a few passages, set forth as its quintessence. It could claim superior validity over the common "Liberal" argument only if it could be shown that the passages in which it concentrates the essence of the argument for a human Jesus present to our view an exclusively human Jesus, that is, a Jesus who is in such a sense human that He cannot also be divine. These matters will require some brief consideration.

That the Jesus of the Evangelists, while truly God and as such claiming our worship, is not exclusively God, but also man, ought not in these days to require argument to prove. Certainly for those who hold the position of Schmiedel with respect to the origin and dating of the Synoptic Gospels, all motive for failure to recognize the divine-human character of the Jesus of these Gospels would seem to be removed. To say no more, the Jesus of Paul is distinctly conceived as a divine person who became man on a mission of mercy for men,[128] and His true humanity is as persistently presupposed as His deity itself. If He is in His essential nature rich, He became poor that by His poverty we might become rich; if He subsists in His proper nature "in the form of God," He did not consider His being on an equality with God so precious but that for the good of men He was willing to take "the form of a servant": He was no less, as concerns His flesh, of Israel, of the seed of David, than He was in His higher nature "God over all, blessed for ever." And Paul does not present this conception as a novelty, a peculiarity of His personal thought, an invention of His own. He tells us distinctly, on the contrary, that it was the common faith of the Christian communities among which he moved: "*for ye know,*" says he, "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that although He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor." What reason is there for doubting that it was the conception of the writers of the Synoptic Gospels, and is the account to give of their frank representation of Jesus now as divine, and now as human, with inextricable intermixture of the traits of deity and humanity? Consider only that "pillar-passage," Mk. xiii. 32, which in one breath ascribes to Him an exalted being above all creatures and ignorance of so simple a matter as the time of the occurrence of an earthly event. In point of fact, the historical tradition of Jesus of which the Synoptic Gospels are the bearers, and which stretches back of them as far into the past as literary criticism enables us to penetrate, is the tradition of an exclusively divine Jesus as little as it is the tradition of an exclusively human Jesus; it is distinctly the tradition of a divine Jesus who is living and moving in the flesh. To represent statements in this tradition which emphasize the humanity of Jesus as on that account contradictory to its fundamental tendency is nothing short of absurd. Only if they could be shown to ascribe to Jesus a clearly exclusive humanity could they run athwart the drift of the tradition in which they are embedded.

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[128] Even B. W. Bacon ("Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress," 1911, p. 268) can speak briefly of "Paul's Christology of incarnation and atonement."

We are not forgetting the currency of the representation that the two-natured Jesus is a contribution of Paul's to Christian thought. That the Synoptic Gospels are "Pauline" in their conception of Jesus scarcely anybody doubts nowadays. But it is still widely held that they are Pauline because their conception has been moulded by Paul, not, as is more nearly true, because Paul was moulded by the historical tradition of which they are the repositories. In point of fact, however, the two-natured Jesus is aboriginal to Christian thought; and the proof of this lies in that very failure of literary criticism to find a tradition of a Jesus different from its own back of the Synoptic record, which has provoked Schmiedel into seeking such a tradition by the more direct path of immediate historical criticism. The assumption that has ruled "Liberal" criticism for a generation that between Paul and the primitive community there lies a deep gulf and again another between the primitive community and the actual Jesus, must give way before this fact. It is already giving way. Franz Dibelius is but voicing a growing better understanding of the state of the case when he declares roundly that it is quite unjustified, and altogether contrary to historical reality, to assume, as has so long been assumed, "that there are two deep clefts in the history of primitive Christianity, one between Jesus and the Jerusalem community, and the other between the primitive community and Paul; that the theology of Paul — Paulinism — is substantially different from the theology of the primitive community and the theology of the primitive community substantially different from the faith of Jesus; that our whole tradition as to the life and words of Jesus is strongly influenced — 'painted over' — by the conceptions of Christ of the primitive community and of Paul."[129] Even an Adolf Harnack warns us that the place of Paul in the history of Christian thought was not that of a creator, and that the gospel Paul preached was already preached by the primitive community and coalesces in substance with that of Jesus Himself; so that a crass contrast between what he calls "the first" and "the second" gospels can by no means be erected.[130] It will be observed that the effect of this revulsion from the current opposition of Paul and the primitive community, or of Paul and Jesus, is not exhausted in wiping out the difference between Paul and Jesus which it has been the custom to emphasize; it also wipes out the difference between the early community and Jesus which it has been equally the custom to emphasize. That is to say, it sets aside the canon on which "Liberal" criticism has been accustomed to act when it has assigned a large part of the Gospel tradition to "the Christian community," whose faith, it has been asserted, has been carried back into the historical tradition and imposed on Jesus. There is no evidence, as Dibelius rightly insists, that any such process took place, and, in the absence of that evidence, we may claim even a Weinel as a witness to the impropriety of assuming it. He is telling us how the work of criticism is to be prosecuted. Literary criticism, he says, must first be carried to its utmost extent. Its business is to make clear what the oldest sources contain. After that has been ascertained, historical criticism is to be called in. Its business is to determine what has been added to the true tradition in the course of oral transmission. He adds: [131]

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[129] "Das Abendmahl," 1911, p. 8.

[130] "Das doppelte Evangelium im Neuen Testament" (1910) in "Aus Wissenschaft und Leben," ii. 1911, p. 216 (E. T. in *The Proceedings and Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress*, 1911, p. 101). Cf. "What is Christianity?" E. T. 1901, pp. 153–154. Also H. Weinel, "Ist das 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, pp. 15–16; "Seven Oxford Men," "Foundations," 1913, pp. 77, 157.

> "For this, now, the sole canon for distinguishing the genuine from the non-genuine is the principle that only such traits of the tradition are to be excluded as not genuine which *can* not come from an interest of Jesus, but only from an interest of the community. This principle — as was shown above against Wrede — is not to be stretched into the different one that wherever the community has an interest — where, however, no reason forbids that Jesus may have also had it — the tradition is to be rejected as wholly ungenuine. Rather — since here it is always a matter of exclusion — proof must first be adduced that the interest in question can have arisen only later."

As long, then, as evidence is lacking that the conception of Jesus as divine was the product of the faith of the community, we are not only justified in holding that the claims to a divine nature attributed to Jesus by the historical tradition are genuine, but we are bound so to hold.

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[131] *Ibid.*, pp. 30–31. Weinel presents here the common "Liberal" canon of criticism in its most reasonable form. He rejects it in the sweeping positive form that everything is to be rejected which can be explained from the "interests" of the early Christian community, and validates it only in the narrower negative form that only that is to be rejected which cannot be explained from an "interest" of Jesus but only from an interest of the community. In this form, however, it remains still unworkable. It involves, indeed, circular reasoning: we are to determine what is true of Jesus by omitting all that is not true of Jesus; and of course we must know what is true of Jesus before we can determine what is not true of Jesus. We may search the literature of criticism almost in vain for workable *formal* canons of criticism. E. A. Abbott does indeed suggest one ("Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1782, note 2; cf. col. 1788, note 2 and Schmiedel's allusion to it, col. 1872) in the form that the presence of stumbling-blocks in a narrative is proof of an early date; and this is a canon which is recognized in general by the methodologists (cf. E. A. Freeman, "The Methods of Historical Study," 1886, pp. 128, 136; H. B. George, "Historical Evidence," 1909, p. 165) as analogous to the rule in Textual Criticism that "preference should be given to the *difficilior lectio*." But this canon is very plastic in its application as may be observed from Abbott's exposition of it on the one hand, and Schmiedel's reading of it as equivalent to his canon of contradiction on the other (cf. "Das vierte Evangelium, etc.," p. 86 bottom). Bernheim (*op cit.*, p. 507) remarks on the slowness of the emergence into recognition in general historical science "of the great simple maxims of investigation."

But, it may be demanded, is not, as Bousset phrases it, faith the foe of fact?[132] And are we not justified in discounting the claims to a divine nature placed on the lips of Jesus by the Christian community, by the mere fact that this community was a worshipper of Jesus and therefore predisposed to represent Him as making the claims which would justify that worship? This is, however, precisely what we have just seen Weinel telling us it is illegitimate to do. The fact that the community believed Jesus to be divine is no proof that Jesus did not Himself also believe that He was divine. It must first be proved (assuming it, is not enough) that Jesus could not have made a claim to divinity, before the otherwise credible representation of the community that He did make such a claim can be set aside. We must not fall into the banality of pronouncing the testimony of earnest men to facts within their knowledge untrustworthy, just in proportion as they have themselves believed these facts and yielded themselves to their influence. Rather, their adherence to these facts, and their manifest profound belief in them, is the strongest testimony to their actuality which they could give us. So far from faith being the foe of fact, faith is the correlate of fact and its proper evidence. " Faith," in other words, as a recent writer puts it,[133] " did not incapacitate the evangelists as narrators; it showed them, rather, how infinitely the life of Jesus deserved narration." "What mandate of historical method," exclaims Johannes Weiss,[134] "tells us that the interested parties [*die Betheiligten*] are to be distrusted under all circumstances? . . . The truly unprejudiced man will say: 'With reference to the nature of a personality we shall always reach ultimately a clearer notion along with these who have surrendered themselves to his influence than with those whom hate has made blind, or who have simply taken no interest in him.'" The matter is placed in a fair light by some remarks of W. Heitmüller's:[135]

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[132] " Was wissen wir von Jesus? " 1904, p. 54: " It has been rightly emphasized that in this regard our first three Gospels are distinguished from the fourth only in degree. Must there not, then, have taken place here a complete repainting from the standpoint of faith? For there is a certain propriety in saying that faith is the foe of history. Where we believe and honor we no longer see objectively."

[133] Hugh R. Mackintosh, " The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ," 1912, p. 8. He continues: " The impulse to select, to fling upon words or incidents a light answering to the later situation of the Church, is natural and intelligible; what is not so is an impulse to deform or to fabricate. ' Fidelity to the historical tradition,' a sympathetic writer [it is of E. F. Scott, " The Fourth Gospel," p. 2 that he is speaking] has said, ' was undoubtedly the chief aim of the Synoptic writers. Their work may here and there bear traces of theological coloring, but their first interest was the facts. Their part was not to interpret, but simply to record.' "

> "For all particular accounts we are indebted altogether to *Christian* sources, that is, to sources which come from followers of Jesus. It is a sign of the presently reigning anxiety with respect to the knowledge of Jesus and especially a proof of the defective historical training of the oppugners of Jesus, that this fact is regarded as a ground of uneasiness, and, on the other side, as a weapon to be used against the historicity of the Nazarene. Who, on such grounds, doubts the historicity of Socrates, because we are indebted to his votaries (*Verehren*), Plato and Xenophon, for the chief accounts of him? And whence do we have any knowledge of Buddha save from the Buddhist literature?"[136]

In the absence of all positive proof that Jesus was not what His followers represent Him, we must accept Him as what they represent Him. To refer subjectively to the faith of His followers what they refer objectively to His person, for no other reason than that it would seem to us more natural that He should have been something different — what we choose to think Him rather than what they knew Him to be — is only to be guilty ourselves, in the portrait which we form of Jesus, in an immensely aggravated form, of the fault of which we accuse them.

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[134] "Jesus von Nazareth, etc.," 1910, p. 93.

[135] Schiele und Zscharnack's "Die Religion, etc.," iii. 1912, col. 345.

[136] Cf. H. Weinel, "Ist das 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, p. 28. "The whole tradition about Jesus is Christian, — Mark too, even Wellhausen's 'Primitive Mark,' has Christian traits; and what is Christian must be cleared away from the portrait of Jesus before He Himself is found. But, then, only what is in a particular sense Christian. Jesus was certainly no Jew, but something new; what is Christian is to be warded off from Him only so far as it concerns thoughts and ideas and tendencies which only the later community could have." The emphasis upon the word "only" here is strong; see p. 31 (quoted above, p. 247) and also pp. 21–22 when in opposition to Wrede, Weinel declares: "We must give credit to a tradition so long as it is not clearly proved to be impossible." We must not reject tradition *in principle* and demand that historical facts be shown to be *necessary*, before we accept them as *actual*.

We have allowed that Schmiedel's "pillar-passages" might be worthy of more consideration as evidence of a contradictory tradition underlying that which alone has survived and become embodied in the Synoptic Gospels, if the Jesus which they bring before us was not merely a Jesus who possessed truly human traits and who sometimes would not work miracles, but a Jesus who was merely a human being and was quite incapable of working miracles in any circumstance. Of such an implication of these "pillar-passages," however, there can be no question, as has already sufficiently appeared. He in whom a truly human soul dwelt (though in conjunction with the Divine Spirit) might well — nay, needs must — have been the subject, as respects that soul, of ignorances (Mk. xiii. 32) and the sense of desolation in the throes of mortal agony (Mk. xv. 34); and might take a secondary place in comparison with the pure Divine Spirit (Mt. xii. 32). Refusal to work miracles in given circumstances and on particular demands cannot be held to carry with it sheer inability to work them in all circumstances (Mk. vi. 5; viii. 12). Even in the instances (Mk. x. 18; vi. 5) in which a certain surface plausibility may attach to the contention that a less than divine Jesus is implied, this plausibility depends upon a particular interpretation which does not do justice to the actual language of the passages. The chief interest which attaches to Schmiedel's "pillar-passages" accordingly lies in the exposure which they supply of the weakness of the case against the consistency of the portraiture of the divine Jesus drawn in the Synoptic narratives. Innumerable passages may be pointed out in which the true humanity of Jesus is presupposed and illustrated; but when passages are sought in which the true deity of Jesus is denied or excluded, they are discoverable with great difficulty and are verifiable only at the price of a method of interpreting them which does extreme violence to them.

Schmiedel is not alone in his failure to unearth such passages. Others, too, have sought for them and have come forward with as meager a fruitage of their searching in their hands. For example, H. J. Holtzmann thought that he could adduce a few passages — they are five in all — in which Jesus ranked Himself in dignity of being distinctly below the Divine. It may be worth while to place Holtzmann's passages by the side of Schmiedel's that the weakness of the general case may become more apparent. What Holtzmann is contending for, is that, however high the self-estimation may be which is involved in Jesus' claim to the Messiahship — a claim which Schmiedel also allows that Jesus certainly made, and against the "presumption" involved in which, to call it by no uglier name, he also strives to defend his Jesus.[137] He nevertheless distinctly ranks Himself below the Divine in dignity and thus guards Himself against the imputation of claiming "superhumanhood" (*Uebermenschentum*). The central portion of his argument runs as follows: [138]

"Let the title of Messiah betoken the highest exaltation of human self-esteem (*Selbstgefühl*), there is at least given in the unqualified subordination of the idea of the Messiah to the supreme idea of God an absolutely sufficient guarantee against a self-glorifying superhumanness. Immutable facts establish this, such as that sins against the Son of Man are adjudged pardonable, in contrast with sins against the Spirit of God (Mt. xii. 32 = Lk. xii. 10), and that He recognizes as His own not those that call on Him as Lord, but only those that do the will of His Father (Mt. vii. 21–23 = Lk. vi. 46, Mk. iii. 35 = Mt. xii. 50 = Lk. viii. 21).[139] He even indeed declines to be addressed as ' Good Master,' because this would involve assumption of God's exclusive property (Mk. x. 18 = Lk. xviii. 19). It is not His but solely God's concern to dispose of dignities and honors in the Kingdom of Heaven (Mk. x. 40 = Mt. xx. 23). Jesus rather knows Himself (Lk. xxii. 27) with each of His followers as a servant, and when He enforces upon His disciples that all true greatness which avails with God reveals itself in service (Mk. x. 43–45 = Mt. xx. 26–28; Mt. xxiii. 11 = Lk. xxii. 26) this applies to Himself too. These are declarations incapable of being invented (*unerfindbare*), which surpass in eternal value all that is eschatological, in the mouth of Him whom nevertheless the very next generation exalted to the throne of the Judge of the world (Mt. xxv. 31–34) and in the end made equal with God.[140]

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[137] "Die Person Jesu, etc.," pp. 10–18 (E. T. pp. 28–52). It was in no sense due to presumption (*Ueberhebung, pride*), he contends, that Jesus held Himself to be the Messiah. He reached that conception of Himself only through severe struggles (p. 16). Therefore, though in so thinking of Himself, He cannot be cleared of the charge of being a visionary (*Schwärmer*), if this means only that "He cherished expectations concerning Himself which go too high and are afterwards not realized," yet these too exalted expectations were not the product of pride (*Selbstüberhebung*) and He was not a visionary in this sense. "It certainly is a misfortune that the highest up to which Jesus reached out in order to fulfil His mission, His belief in His messianic dignity, . . . led also to expectations such as these, which could never really be fulfilled; but I do not see that any shadow is cast by this upon His character or His purity" (p. 17: E. T. p. 51).

[138] H. J. Holtzmann, "Das messianische Bewusstsein Jesu," 1907, pp. 82 f.

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[139] On these passages, cf. Karl Thieme, " Die christliche Demut," i. (1906) p. 137: " But with reference to such judgments on such passages, the question is to be asked whether there are really set over against one another here God and Jesus' ego, a demeanor towards the one and a demeanor towards the other.

" What Jesus brings into opposition to one another is rather two kinds of demeanor towards Himself and His preaching — the one, calling Him ' Lord, Lord,' pleading rights of kinship with Him, giving Him extravagant admiration, envying His mother, and so forth, and not doing what He commands (cf. Lk. vi. 46); the other, according obedience to the word of God with which He comes forward, and doing what He announces as the will of God. The general meaning of these declarations is not that Jesus points in any way away from Himself to God, but that He deprecates every manner of relation to Him which does not include the doing of His moral requirements."

[140] It is interesting to observe how little advance has been made on the Arians in this method of argument. Athanasius (Migne, " Patr. Graec." xxvi. col. 985 B, C) tells us that in attempting to discover a less than divine Jesus in the Scriptures they said: " How can [the Son] be like [the Father] or of the Father's essence, when it is written, As the Father has life in Himself, so He has given also to the Son to have life in Himself? There is, they say, a superiority in the giver above the receiver. And, Why callest thou me good? they say, No one is good except one, God. And again, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? And once more, Of the last day no one knoweth, not even the Son, except the Father. And again, Whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world. And again, Whom the Father raised from the dead. How, then,

It was not, however, the next generation which "exalted Jesus to the throne of the Judge of the world," but Jesus Himself; it is involved, to go no farther, in His favorite self-designation of Son of Man. Nor was it merely "in the end" that He was made "equal with God": Jesus Himself placed Himself not only "at the side of God" in contradistinction to all creatures, above the angels of heaven themselves (Mk. xiii. 32, one of Schmiedel's "pillar-passages"), and asserted for Himself an interactive reciprocity with God in knowledge of one another, such as implies His equality with God (Mt. xi. 27, a passage admitted by Schmiedel to be authentic), but also combines His own person as Son with the Father and the Spirit in the One Name which is above every name (Mt. xxviii. 19). The difficulty with Holtzmann as with Schmiedel is only that he cannot think in the terms of the historical tradition of Christianity and is consumed by zeal to get behind the tradition and impose his own forms of thought on the "real" Jesus. The marks of lowliness of spirit which he discovers in Jesus — who, being man, declared Himself to be meek and lowly in heart — seem to him to be inconsistent with a claim for Jesus of a Divine nature for no other reason than that he sets before himself the irreconcilable dilemma, either Divine or human, and never once entertains the wider conception of both Divine and human. And yet it is really undeniable that this is the conception which rules the whole historical tradition of Christianity, underlies the narratives of the Synoptic Gospels as truly as the reasoning of Paul, and provides the one key which will unlock the mysteries of the self-consciousness of Jesus as depicted in the earliest tradition known to us. To tear the elements of this self-consciousness apart, and assign fragments of it to Jesus and other fragments to the "faith of the community" on no other ground than that thus a view of Jesus and of the development of Christian feeling and thinking about Jesus is attained which falls better in with the para-

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they say, can He that is raised from the dead be like or of the same nature with Him that raised Him?" This is to all intents and purposes Holtzmann before Holtzmann.

digms of our preconceived conceptions of what were "natural," or even of what were possible, is utterly illegitimate criticism, in the complete absence of evidence for any such discrimination of facts in the tradition, or for any such development of feeling and thinking concerning Jesus, as is supposed. We must awake at last to the understanding that the historical tradition of Jesus is of a Divine-human Jesus and that this tradition is copious, constant, and to all appearance aboriginal. To break with this tradition is to break with the entire historical tradition of Jesus, and to cast ourselves adrift to form a conception of the real Jesus purely *a priori*, in accordance with our own notions of the fit or the possible, unaided by the least scrap of historical evidence.

But surely, it will be exclaimed, we must exclude the impossible from our conception of the actual Jesus. Undoubtedly the impossible cannot have been actual. It is a reasonable custom of historians therefore to exclude the manifestly impossible from the constructions of the actual which they extract from the testimony before them;[141] though it is worthy of remark that they recommend a wise wariness in declaring attested occurrences impossible.[142] Of one thing we may meanwhile be sure, — that what was actual can scarcely be impossible; and it is not a bad way — among others — of determining what is possible to observe what is actual. The testimony to the actual existence of the supernatural Jesus is simply overwhelming. Shall we set it all aside on the bald assumption that the supernatural is impossible? Two remarks fall to be made here. The first is that Schmiedel at least is committed not to treat the supernatural element in the Synoptical account of Jesus as *a priori* impossible. "It would clearly be wrong," he says,[143] "in an investigation such as the present, to start from any such postulate or axiom as that 'miracles' are impossible,"—though, as we have seen, if he does not start from this postulate he soon calls it in as the determining principle of his criticism.[144] The second remark is that the supernatural element cannot be excluded from the life of Jesus except on the ground of its *a priori* impossibility. To all critical efforts to exclude it, it proves absolutely intractable. The whole historical tradition testifies to an intensely supernatural Jesus. It is only on the ground of a philosophical presupposition that the supernatural is impossible that the supernatural Jesus can be set aside.[145] But thus the question as to the supernatural Jesus is shifted into a region other than the historical. Whether the supernatural is possible is a question not of historical criticism but of philosophical world-view. For the present it may be permitted to go at that. It is enough to have made it plain that if the supernatural Jesus is to be displaced from history, it is not on historical grounds that He can be displaced.

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[141] Cf. Langlois and Seignobos, "Introduction to the Study of History," 1898, pp. 206 ff.: H. B. George, "Historical Evidence," 1909, pp. 138–167.

[142] H. B. George, for example, wishes us to be chary of rejecting all miraculous accounts (though on grounds which only go part of the way) and not only enunciates the general proposition that "when a statement is made by a real contemporary, we require something beyond mere intrinsic improbability to lead us to disbelieve it" (p. 164), but, with his eye directly on miracles, declares that although when the document narrating them is of low credibility they may be safely neglected, yet when the general credibility of documents must be rated high, "it becomes more difficult to disparage any statement contained in them, whether it is called miraculous or not" (p. 169).

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[143] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1876.

[144] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 1878: "Lk. xxiii. 44 f. expressly, and Mk. xv. 33, Mt. xxvii. 45 also to all appearance, allege an eclipse of the sun, a celestial phenomenon which, however, is possible only at the period of New Moon,—i.e., shortly before the 1st of Nisan—and cannot happen on the 15th or 14th of a month," that is to say the phenomenon of the darkening of the sun *cannot* have happened unless it happened *naturally*. Cf. above, note 14.

[145] "For," says Strauss (second "Life of Jesus," 1879, i. p. 19), "if the Gospels are really and truly historical, it is not possible to exclude miracles from the life of Jesus; if, on the other hand, miracles are incompatible with history, then the Gospels are not really historical records."

VI

THE "TWO NATURES" AND RECENT CHRISTOLOGICAL SPECULATION

THE "TWO NATURES" AND RECENT CHRISTOLOGICAL SPECULATION[1]

I. THE CHRISTOLOGY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WRITINGS

ONE of the most portentous symptoms of the decay of vital sympathy with historical Christianity which is observable in present-day academic circles is the widespread tendency in recent Christological discussion to revolt from the doctrine of the Two Natures in the Person of Christ. The significance of this revolt becomes at once apparent, when we reflect that the doctrine of the Two Natures is only another way of stating the doctrine of the Incarnation; and the doctrine of the Incarnation is the hinge on which the Christian system turns. No Two Natures, no Incarnation; no Incarnation, no Christianity in any distinctive sense. Nevertheless, voices are raised all about us declaring the conception of two natures in Christ no longer admissible; and that very often with full appreciation of the significance of the declaration.

Thus, for example, Johannes Weiss tells us that it is unthinkable that Godhood and manhood should be united in a single person walking upon the earth; that, while no doubt men of ancient time could conceive "that a man might really be an incarnate deity," modern men feel much too strongly the impassable barrier which separates the divine and the human to entertain such a notion.[2] And Paul Wilhelm Schmiedel pronounces it "simply impossible," now that they have awakened to inquire "what is psychologically possible and impossible," for men to submit any longer to a demand that does such violence at once to their intelligence and to their religious experience as the demand "that they should embrace the idea of a perfect God and a perfect Man as united in the one and indivisible person of a Saviour whom they are longing to revere." Accordingly, since the divine and human nature cannot be united in Jesus, and since "Jesus was undoubtedly man," he continues, we have simply to regard him as man and nothing more.[3] Coming nearer home, William Adams Brown declares that men are no longer to be satisfied with "the old conception of Christ as a being of two natures, one divine and one human, dwelling in a mysterious union, incapable of description, within the confines of a single personality." Such a conception, he thinks, fails to "do justice to the genuine humanity" of Jesus, who "shares our limitations"; and supposes "an impassable gulf between God and man" which requires "a miracle" to bridge it. The only "incarnation" which is real, he asserts, concerns not "a single instance," but the eternal entrance of God "into humanity."[4] These are but examples of numerous deliverances which may differ from one another in the clearness with which they announce the consequences, but do not differ in the decisiveness with which they reject the doctrine of the Two Natures.[5]

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[1] Reprinted from *The American Journal of Theology*, xv. 1911, pp. 337–361; 546–568.

[2] Christus: Die Anfänge des Dogmas," (1909), p. 88.

The violence of the revolution which is thus attempted is somewhat obscured by the bad habit, which is becoming common, of speaking of the doctrine of the Two Natures as in some sense the creation of the Chalcedonian fathers. Even Albert Schweitzer permits himself to write:

451 A.D.

> "When at Chalcedon the West overcame the East, its doctrine of the two natures dissolved the unity of the Person, and thereby cast off the last possibility of a return to the historical Jesus. The self-contradiction was elevated into a law. . . . This dogma had first to be shattered before men could once more go out in quest of the historical Jesus, before they could even grasp the thought of His existence."[6]

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[3] "Jesus or Christ?" Being the *Hibbert Journal* Supplement for 1909, p. 66.

[4] *Methodist Quarterly Review*, Nashville, Tenn., 1911, p. 44.

[5] Cf. how the subject is dealt with in such widely read dogmatic treatises as Julius Kaftan's "Dogmatik"$^{3.4}$. (1901), §§ 42, 44 ff.; and F. A. B. Nitzsch's "Lehrbuch der evangelischen Dogmatik" (1892), §§ 43 ff.

[6] "The Quest of the Historical Jesus," E. T., 1910, p. 3.

By "the historical Jesus" is here meant the merely human Jesus; and it is quite true that the doctrine of the Two Natures interposes an insuperable obstacle to the recognition of such a Jesus as the real Jesus. There is a sense also in which it may be truly said that at Chalcedon the West impressed on the East its long-established doctrine of the Two Natures — a doctrine which had been fully formulated in the West from at least the time of Tertullian. But by this very token it is clear that the doctrine decreed at Chalcedon was nothing new; and if, as is often the case,[7] the further suggestion is conveyed that what was new in it was the "Two Natures" itself, the perversion becomes monstrous.

It was no part of the task of the fathers at Chalcedon to invent a new doctrine, and the doctrine which they formulated had no single new element in it. Least of all was the doctrine of the Two Natures itself new. No one of the disputants in the long series of controversies which led up to Chalcedon, any more than in the equally long series of controversies which led down from it, cherished the least doubt of this doctrine — not even Arius, and certainly not Apollinaris, or Nestorius, or Eutyches, or any of the great Monophysite or Monothelite leaders, or any of their opponents. The doctrine of the Two Natures formed the common basis on which all alike stood; their differences concerned only the quality or integrity of the two natures united in the one person, or the character or effects of the union by which they were brought together. It was the adjustment of these points of difference alone with which the council was concerned, or rather, to speak more precisely, the authoritative determination of the range within which such attempted adjustments might be tolerated in a church calling itself Christian.

It was not to the fourth-century fathers alone, however, that the doctrine of the Two Natures was "given." There

[7] Cf. J. Weiss, "Christus," usw. (1909), p. 88: "A series of inexpressibly complicated and supremely unhappy controversies attached itself to this, until the famous compromise formula [*Beschwichtigungsformel*] of one person in two natures was discovered, which no matter how acutely it may be elaborated can never give satisfaction."

never was a time when it was not the universal presupposition of the whole attitude, intellectual and devotional alike, of Christians to their Lord. The term δύο οὐσίαι may first occur in extant writings in a fragment of Melito's of Sardis[8] (Tertullian, duae substantiae; Origen and later writers generally, δύο φύσεις). But the thing goes back to the beginning.[9] When we read, for example, in Clement of Rome's Letter to the Corinthians, in a passage (xvi) containing echoes of Heb. i. 8 and Phil. ii. 6, that "the Scepter of the Majesty of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, came not in the pomp of arrogance or pride — though he could well have done that — but in lowliness of mind," or in a passage (xxxii) manifestly reminiscent of Rom. ix. 5, that "the Lord Jesus," . . . that Lord Jesus to whom the highest predicates are ascribed (as e.g. in xxxvi) — is "according to the flesh," "of Jacob," the two natures are as plainly presupposed as they are openly asserted in such Ignatian passages as: "There is one Healer, fleshly and spiritual, generate and ingenerate, God in man, true life in death, both of Mary and of God, first passible and then impassible, Jesus Christ our Lord" (Eph. vii. 2), or: "For our God, Jesus Christ, was borne in the womb of Mary, according to a dispensation, of the seed of David, indeed, but also of the Holy Spirit" (xviii. 2). Adolf Harnack, it is true, has made a brilliant attempt to distinguish "adoptionist" as well as "pneumatic" Christologies underlying the Christian tradition. But he has felt himself compelled notably to qualify his original representation;[10] while F. Loofs has quite properly permitted the whole notion to drop out of sight;[11] and R. Seeberg has solidly refuted it.[12] To discover a one-natured Christ, we must turn to the outlawed sects of the Docetists on the one hand, and the Ebionites with their successors, the

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[8] Fragment VI, Otto, ix. p. 416.

[9] Cf. F. Loofs, "Herzog Realencyklopädie,"^{3} iv. pp. 36, 37: "Melito spoke of δύο οὐσίαι in Christ. The tradition of Asia Minor supplied to him the materials for this: the formula was not derived from it by Melito."

[10] "Grundriss,"^{4} p. 44, note.

[11] "Herzog Realencyklopädie,"^{3} iv. pp. 23 ff.

[12] "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte"^{2} (1908), i. pp. 104 ff.

Dynamistic Montanists, on the other. Whatever else the church brought with it out of the apostolic age, it emerged from that, its formative, epoch with so firm a faith in the Two Natures of its Lord as to be incapable of wavering. "Perfect man"[13] it knew him to be. But the exhortation of Christians to one another ran in such strains as we find in the opening words of the earliest Christian homily that has come down to us: "Brethren, thus ought we to think of Jesus Christ — as of God, as of Judge of quick and dead";[14] and so exhorting one another, they naturally were known to their heathen observers precisely as worshippers of Christ.[15] So fixed in the Christian consciousness was the conception of the Two Natures of the Savior, that nothing could dislodge it. We shall have to come down to the radical outbreak which accompanied the Reformation — Trancendental or Socinian — for the first important defection from it after the early Dynamistic Monarchianism; and it was not until the rise in the eighteenth century of the naturalistic movement known as the Enlightenment that there was inaugurated any widespread revolt from it. It is under the influence of this revolt, which has not yet spent its force, that so many "moderns" have turned away from the doctrine as "impossible."

The constancy with which the church has confessed the doctrine of the Two Natures finds its explanation in the fact that this doctrine is intrenched in the teaching of the New Testament. The Chalcedonian Christology, indeed, in its complete development is only a very perfect synthesis of the biblical data. It takes its starting-point from the New Testament as a whole, thoroughly trusted in all its declarations, and seeks to find a comprehensive statement of the scriptural doctrine of the Person of Christ, which will do full justice to all the elements of its representation. The eminent success which it achieves in this difficult undertaking is due to the circumstance that it is not the product of a single mind working under a "scientific" impulse, that is to say, with purely theoretical intent, but of the mind, or rather the heart, of the church at large searching for an adequate formulation of its vital faith, that is to say, of a large body of earnest men distributed through a long stretch of time, and living under very varied conditions, each passionately asserting, and seeking to have justice accorded to, elements of the biblical representation which particularly "found" him. The final statement is not a product of the study, therefore, but of life; and was arrived at, externally considered, through protracted and violent controversies, during the course of which every conceivable construction of the biblical data had been exploited, weighed, and its elements of truth sifted out and preserved, while the elements of error which deformed it were burned up as chaff in the fires of the strife. To the onlooker from this distance of time, the main line of the progress of the debate takes on an odd appearance of a steady zigzag advance. Arising out of the embers of the Arian controversy, there is first vigorously asserted, over against the reduction of our Lord to the dimensions of a creature, the pure deity of his spiritual nature (Apollinarianism); by this there is at once provoked, in the interests of the integrity of our Lord's humanity, the equally vigorous assertion of the completeness of his human nature as the bearer of his deity (Nestorianism); this in turn provokes, in the interests of the oneness of his Person, an equally vigorous assertion of the conjunction of these two natures in a single individuum (Eutychianism): from all of which there gradually emerges at last, by a series of corrections, the balanced statement of Chalcedon, recognizing at once in its "without confusion, without conversion, eternally and inseparably" the union in the Person of Christ of a complete deity and a complete humanity, constituting a single person without prejudice to the continued integrity of either nature. The pendulum of thought had swung back and forth in ever-decreasing arcs, until at last it found rest along the line of action of the fundamental force. Out of the continuous

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[13] Ignatius, *ad Symrn.* iv. p. 2, *ad fin.;* Zahn compares the fragment of Melito's alluded to above (note 8): θεὸς γὰρ ὢν ὁμοῦ τε καὶ ἄνθρωπος τέλειος ὁ αὐτός.

[14] 2 Clem. Rom. i. 1.

[15] Plin., *Ep.* x. p. 96: "carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem."

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controversy of a century there issued a balanced statement in which all the elements of the biblical representation were taken up and combined. Work so done is done for all time; and it is capable of ever-repeated demonstration that in the developed doctrine of the Two Natures (as it is worked out with marvelous insight and delicate precision in such a presentation of it as is given, say, in the "Admonitio Christiana," 1581, written chiefly by Zacharias Ursinus and published in his works) and in it alone, all the biblical data are brought together in a harmonious statement, in which each receives full recognition, and out of which each may derive its sympathetic exposition. This key unlocks the treasures of the biblical instruction on the Person of Christ as none other can, and enables the reader as he currently scans the sacred pages to take up their declarations as they meet him, one after the other, into an intelligently consistent conception of his Lord.

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The key which unlocks so complicated a lock can scarcely fail to be its true key. And the argument may be turned around. That all the varied representations concerning our Lord's Person contained in the New Testament fall into harmony under the ordering influence of so simple a hypothesis as that of the Two Natures, authenticates these varying representations as each a fragment of a real whole. It were inconceivable that so large a body of different and sometimes apparently divergent data could synthetize in so simple a unifying conception, were they not component elements of a unitary reality. And this consideration is greatly strengthened by the manner in which these differing or sometimes even apparently divergent data are distributed through the New Testament. They are not parceled out severally to the separate books, the composition of different writers, so that one set of them is peculiar to one writer or to one set of writers, and a set of different import peculiar to another writer or set of writers. They are, rather, pretty evenly distributed over the face of the New Testament, and the most different or apparently divergent data are found side by side in the writings of the same author or even in the same writing. The doctrine of the Two Natures is not merely a synthesis of all data concerning the Person of Christ found in the New Testament; it is the doctrine of each of the New Testament books in severalty. There is but one doctrine of the Person of Christ inculcated or presupposed by all the New Testament writers without exception. In this respect the New Testament is all of a piece. Book may differ from book in the terms in which it gives expression to the common doctrine, or in the fulness with which it develops its details, or with which it draws out its implications. But all are at one in the inculcation or presupposition of the common doctrine of the Two Natures.

It has no doubt required some time for the critical study of the New Testament writings to arrive solidly at this conclusion. But it is at this conclusion, it may fairly be said, that the critical study of the New Testament has at length arrived. The day is gone by in which a number of mutually exclusive Christologies could be ascribed to the writers of the New Testament and set over against one another in crass contradiction. Nowadays, the New Testament is admitted to be Christologically much on a level, and though we still hear of a pre-Pauline, a Pauline, and a post-Pauline Christology, this very phraseology shows the dominance of a single type, and the boundary lines which separate even the varieties which are thus suggested are very indistinct. There are in fact next to no pre-Pauline writings in the New Testament, and therefore no pre-Pauline Christologies are taught in it; and though there are writings in the New Testament which in point of chronological sequence are post-Pauline, it is only with much ado that a post-Pauline Christology in the proper sense of the term can be even plausibly discovered in it. F. C. Baur discriminated three sharply divergent types of Christology among the New Testament writers. To the Synoptists Christ was a mere man, endowed with the Holy Spirit as Messiah; to Paul he was still a man but a deified man; to John he was a God incarnated in a human body. We have to travel far from this before we reach, say, Johannes Weiss. To Weiss the whole New Testament is written under the influence of Paul who introduced the Logos

Christology. Before Paul, men indeed thought of Christ as a deified man; but no New Testament book is written from this standpoint. After Paul, some explication of what is already implicit in Paul took place; but the general lines laid down by Paul are only deepened, not departed from. The Christologies of Peter, Paul, and John are still distinguished; but the distinctions are posited on little or no differences in recorded utterances.

The difficulty in discovering a substantial difference between the Christologies of Paul and John, for example, is fairly illustrated by the straits to which so acute a writer as Johannes Weiss is brought in the effort to establish one. The only such difference he is able to suggest is that the superhuman Being whose incarnation constituted the Two-Natured Christ believed in by both writers alike, is, with Paul, though divine in his nature, yet of subordinate rank to the supreme God, while with John he is the supreme God himself. Unfortunately, however (or, rather, fortunately), when Paul speaks of the superhuman element in the person of his Lord, he does not hesitate to declare him the supreme God in the most exalted sense, and that in language which, for clearness and emphasis, leaves nothing for John to add to it.

Weiss

(argument cont. p27

He does this, for example, in Rom. ix. 5, where he describes Christ as to his higher nature in these great words: *ὁ ὢν ἐπὶ πάντων θεὸς εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, ἀμήν*. It is instructive to observe how Johannes Weiss deals with such a passage. He is arguing that Paul carefully avoids calling Christ by the high name of "God," although he places Him as "Lord" by the side of God (I Cor. iii. 23, viii. 6); and he adds:[16]

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> "It is, then, very remarkable that in the present text of Rom. ix. 5 there stands the following doxology, which can be referred only to Christ: 'He who is God over all, be blessed for ever.' If *κύριος* had stood here we should not have been surprised; that the text should, however, ascribe to Him here a predicate which puts Him altogether in God's place — without any indication of subordination — is inconceivable. Accordingly it has been rightly as-

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[16] "Christus" (1909), p. 29.

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sumed that there is a textual corruption here. It is undoubtedly genuine, however, when, in Jno. xx. 28, Thomas exclaims to the resurrected Christ: 'My Lord and my God.' So also Christ is called God in I Jno. v. 20 and Tit. ii. 13. This is accordant with the dominant Hellenistic mode of thought in these late New Testament writings. The strictly Jewish foundation of the oldest Christianity is no longer so strong; feeling is no longer shocked by the appearance by the side of God of a second Godhead."

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Needless to say, however, there is not a scintilla of evidence of textual corruption in Rom. ix. 5; corruption is assumed solely because the assertion of the passage does not fit in with the lowered Christology which Weiss would fain assign to Paul. The allusion to previous writers who have assumed corruption is doubtless to the recent attempt[17] to revive an old emendation proposed by the Socinian controversialists, J. Schlichting and J. Crell. The suggestion is that the words ὁ ὢν be transposed, so as to read ὢν ὁ (Hoekstra would be satisfied with the simple omission of the ὁ).[18] Thus it is thought the last clause of the passage would be brought into parallelism with its predecessors, and the whole would rise to its climax in the assertion that not only do the fathers belong to the Jews, and not only has the Christ (as regards the flesh) sprung from them, but to them belongs also the supreme God himself who is blessed forevermore, Amen. The mere statement of the proposal surely is its sufficient refutation. The variation of the construction in the instance of the Christ from ὢν to ἐξ ὢν, and the limitation of even this assertion with respect to him to his flesh (τὸ κατὰ σάρκα) render the adjunction of such a a clause as the reconstructed form gives us simply incredible. Should Paul, after refusing to declare their own Messiah to

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[17] J. Lepsius, "Das Reich Christi" (1904); Strömann, *ZNTW* (1907), p. 319; (1908), p. 80 (A. Bischoff).

[18] Cf. W. C. van Manen, "*Conjecturaal-kritiek* toegepast op den Tekst van de Schriften des Nieuwen Testaments" (1880), p. 262. Van Manen wonders that no one, instead of θεὸς has read ὃς after the analogy of I Tim. iii. 16; but that would scarcely (here any more than at I Tim. iii. 16) mend the matter. Christ would remain ὁ ἐπὶ πάντων and be εὐλογητὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας; and these predicates import deity at its height.

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belong distinctively to the Jews and carefully limiting his relation to them to merely that of issuing from them — and that, only "according to the flesh" — immediately assert with climatic emphasis that the supreme and eternal God himself is their peculiar possession? "Is he the God of the Jews only and not also of the Gentiles?" Paul asks in the same broad context (Rom. iii. 29), and answers with emphasis, "Yes, of the Gentiles also"; and by that answer advertises to us that he could not have written here, in his enumeration of the distinctive privileges of the Jews, that "theirs is the God over all, blessed forever." The resort to textual emendation to ease the pressure of the passage fails, thus, as dismally as, according to Weiss's own confession, the more common resort to artificial exegesis of it fails — whether this follows the older methods of varying merely the punctuation so as to throw the obnoxious clause into innocuous isolation as an interjected doxology to God, or the new suggestion of F. C. Burkitt which would take the ὁ ὢν as the Tetragrammaton itself, and read the whole passage as not "description but ascription" — a protestation, calling the Eternal to witness the sincerity of Paul's great asseveration.[19] It is at least a healthful sign of the times when Weiss discards all such artificial exegesis; we may even hope that the day has dawned when it is no longer possible.[20]

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[19] *JTS*, v. pp. 451–455.

[20] C. Clemen, "Religionsgeschichtliche Erklärung des N. T." (1909), pp. 261–262, writes: "If even Jesus himself already exalted himself above the measure of other men by his proclamation of his return to judgment, and this happened to a still greater extent in the primitive Christian community, yet it was Paul who first designates him as the Lord in whom all things consist, and not only sets him side by side with God, but — according to the much more probable interpretation of Rom. ix. 5 — even gives him the very name." Even when the reference to Christ is denied, it is frequently admitted that the exegetical considerations favor it. Thus, M. Brückner, "Die Entstehung der paulinischen Christologie" (1903), p. 67, allows that "exegetically the reference to Christ is almost necessary," though, pleading that "grammatical exegesis cannot always be permitted to give the decision," he decides against it, on the strange ground that it is "precisely here out of place to emphasize the divine nature of Christ," as if the fact that the possession of divine nature by the Messiah who issued from them was not the Jews' supreme glory! Similarly, Robert B. Drummond writes (*The Academy*, March 30, 1895, No.

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It is mere matter of fact that Paul, speaking distinctly *οὐ κατὰ τιμήν, ἀλλὰ κατὰ φύσιν*, as the contrast with *τὸ κατὰ σάρκα* shows, designates Christ here "God over all, blessed forever." It were well for us to adjust our theories to this plain fact and cease to endeavor to brush the fact out of the way of our theories.

Why so much zeal and ingenuity should be expended in attempting to vacate this declaration of its plain meaning, it is meanwhile a little difficult to comprehend. If it stood alone among Paul's utterances[21] it might be natural for those who wish to contribute another doctrine to him to seek to set it in some way aside. But so far from standing alone, it is but one of many declarations running through his epistles, to the same effect. There is Phil. ii. 6, for example, where, beyond question, Christ Jesus is asserted to be "on an equality with God"[22] an assertion, one would think, not easy to reconcile

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1195, p. 273): "I must confess for myself that I feel very strongly the grammatical difficulty of the Unitarian interpretation; but, on the other hand, the improbability of Paul attributing not only deity, but supreme deity (ἐπὶ πάντων Θεός) to Christ, seems to me so great as to outweigh all other considerations." Why, however, it should be thought "improbable" that Paul should attribute to Christ in terms the supreme deity he everywhere accords him in fact does not appear; had Paul held Drummond's views concerning Christ it would have been a different matter. On Rom. ix. 5 in general, see Dwight, *Journal of the Exegetical Society* (1881), p. 22, and Sanday-Headlam, Gifford, and Zahn, *in loco.*

[21] That it does stand alone in Paul's writings is, of course, the implication of Weiss, and is often explicitly asserted. Thus, for example, E. P. Gould, "The Biblical Theology of the New Testament" (1900), pp. 93–94, reasons as follows: "All that can be said in favor of this interpretation, according to which Jesus is here called God, is that it is a natural explanation, probably the natural explanation of the passage as it stands, supposing there is nothing against it. But on the other side is the fact that it stands absolutely alone in the apostle's writings." Phil. ii. 6 Gould interprets as implying that equality with God was something the preincarnate Christ did not possess but might conceivably aspire to (ἁρπαγμός, active). Colossians he denies to Paul.

[22] The interpretation (represented by E. P. Gould; see above note 21; cf. also M. Brückner, *op. cit.*, pp. 66 ff., who thinks the thing lacking to make Christ "equal with God" was only "the name and position of 'Lord'") which first insists on the active form of ἁρπαγμός and then represents Christ's example as consisting on the negative side in a refusal to aspire to equality with God (Brückner even draws a parallel with Gen. iii. 5–9) is certainly

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with the notion that he was a being definitely lower than God. Lietzmann seems therefore to speak very sensibly when he writes in his comment on Rom. ix. 5: "Since Paul represents Christ in Phil. ii. 6 as ἴσα θεῷ there is no reason why he should not, on occasion, call him directly θεός."[23] When he goes on, however, to say: "The decision here, as often, if we are not acting under dogmatic prejudices, is a matter of pure feeling; to me it seems that ὁ ὢν επὶ πάντων θεός is more suitable for the 'Almighty God' the Father of Jesus," he seems to forget that his former remark forbids him to say this feeling could be operative with Paul — which is the only matter *ad rem*. That the writer of Phil. ii. 6 might very well "on occasion" call Christ directly God is made even more clear by the circumstance that he does this very thing in this very passage, and that in the most emphatic manner possible. For that the representation of Christ Jesus as ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ ὑπάρχων is precisely to call him God is evidenced not merely by the intimation which is immediately given that he who is "in the form of God" is "on an equality with God," but by the connotation of the phraseology itself. It is undeniable that in the philosophico-popular mode of speech here employed, "form" means just that body of characterizing qualities which makes anything the particular thing it is — in a word, its specific character.[24] To say that Christ Jesus is[25] "in the form of

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wrong. If ἁρπαγμός is to be taken actively the only tolerable sense is something like that given it by J. Ross, *JTS* (1909), pp. 573–574: Christ "did not think that to be on an equality with God spelled rapacity, plundering, self-aggrandizement," that is to say, did not treat the equality which he had with God as an opportunity for self-aggrandizement but made nothing of himself.

[23] "Handbuch zum N. T.," *in loc.*

[24] Cf. J. B. Lightfoot, *in loc.*: "μορφή implies not the external accidents but the essential attributes"; "μορφή must apply to the attributes of the Godhead. In other words, it is used in a sense substantially the same which it bears in Greek philosophy"; "this sense of μορφή as the specific character."

[25] This is the right tense: for ὑπάρχων is not a past participle; and hence already involves that continuance of Jesus "in the form of God" after as well as before he had assumed "the form of a servant," which is one of the chief implications of the whole passage. There is here, in other words, as often in Paul, an explicit assertion of the Two Natures. Cf. E. H. Gifford, "The Incarnation," 1897.

God" is then to say not less but more than to say shortly that he is "God": for it is to emphasize the fact that he has in full possession and use all those characterizing qualities which make God the particular Being we call "God"; and this mode of expression, rather than the simple term "God," is employed here precisely because it was of the essence of the Apostle's purpose to keep his reader's mind on all that Christ was as God rather than merely on the abstract fact that he was God.

By the side of Phil. ii. 6 there stands also Col. ii. 9, where it is declared that in Christ "there dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," that is to say, in plain words, that Christ is an incarnation of the Godhead in all its fulness, which again is a statement rather difficult to harmonize with the notion that its author believed it was something less than God which was incarnated in Christ. And by the side of the whole series of such passages there stands the immense number of instances in which Christ is designated "Lord." For κύριος is not with Paul of lower connotation than θεός. Johannes Weiss does, indeed, in the passage we have quoted from him above,[26] suggest that if only it were κύριος instead of θεός which we found in Rom. ix. 5 we should experience no surprise at the declaration and, presumably, feel no inclination to correct the text; the implication being that Paul might very well call Christ "Lord over all" but not "God over all." "Lord over all" would have meant, however, precisely what "God over all" means,[27] and it is singularly infelicitous to give the impression that Paul in currently speaking of Christ as "Lord" placed him on a lower plane than God. Paul's intention was precisely the opposite, viz., to put him on the same plane with God; and accordingly it is as "Lord" that all divine attributes and activities are ascribed to Christ and all religious emotions and worship are directed to him. In effect, the Old Testament divine names, Elohim on the one hand, and Jehovah and Adhonai on the other, are in the New Testament distributed between God the Father and God the Son with as little implication of difference in rank here as there. "Lord," in a word, is Paul's divine name for Christ; is treated by him as Christ's proper name — as, in fact, what can scarcely be called anything else than his inter-trinitarian name and, in this technical sense, his "personal" name. Accordingly Paul does not enumerate the Persons of the Trinity as our Lord is reported as doing (Mt. xxviii. 19), according to their relations to one another, "Father, Son, and Spirit," but according to his own relation to each in turn, as God, the Lord, the Spirit: "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (II Cor. xiii. 14). The only distinction which can be discerned between "God" and "Lord" in his usage of the terms is a distinction not in relative dignity, but in emphasis on active sovereignty. "God" is, so to speak, a term of pure exaltation; "Lord" carries with it more expressly the idea of sovereign rulership in actual exercise. It is probable that Paul's appropriation specifically of the divine designation "Lord" to Christ was in part at least occasioned by his conviction that he, as God-man, has become the God of providence in whose hand is the kingdom, to "reign until he hath put all his enemies under his

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[26] Pp. 267–268.

[27] Peter is reported in Acts x. 36 as declaring that Jesus Christ is "Lord of all" and this high designation is sustained by the further announcement in x. 42 that he has been "ordained of God to be the judge of quick and dead," a purely divine function. How, then, can it be said, as is often said, as, e.g., by Schmiedel ("Jesus or Christ?" p. 62), that in Acts x. 38, lying between these two statements of express deity, there "is expressed . . . with noteworthy clearness" the notion that Jesus "had been a man who differed from others merely by reason of his being endowed with divine power"? On the meaning of "Lord of all" compare G. Dalman, "Der Gottesname Adonaj" (1889), p. 83. Referring to the use of the term "Lord" by Luke to characterize Christ, he writes: "It is the same that Paul uses in Phil. ii. 11 where Jesus appears as the Lord to be recognized in heaven and earth and beneath

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the earth in a position in which the Old Testament knows God alone. Jesus is here the *πάντων κύριος* of Acts x. 36 (cf. מָרֵי כָלָּא of God, Talm. Nedarim, 22*b*) which does not lie far from the *ἐπὶ πάντων θεός* of Rom. ix. 5." Dalman goes on, to be sure, to say that "the Apostles would have shrunk from designating Jesus by the Hebrew יהוה or ארני, since these expressions too closely recalled the *θεὸς ἀόρατος*," and that only Thomas' confession (Jno. xx. 28) "treads on the boundary line here"; but these remarks are only the unauthorized expressions of Dalman's own prejudices.

feet" (I Cor. xv. 24, etc.; cf. Phil. ii. 9 ff.), or, as it is expressed with great point and fulness in Eph. i. 20–23, He has been seated on the right hand of God, far above any conceivable power and made head over all things for his church. In a word, the term "Lord" seems to have been specifically appropriated to Christ not because it is a term of function rather than of dignity, but because along with the dignity it emphasizes also function.

All this is, of course, well known to Johannes Weiss. He writes:[28]

> "To expound the religious significance which the use of the name 'Lord' had for the early Christians, the whole New Testament would need to be transcribed. For in the formula 'our Lord Jesus Christ' the essence of the primitive religion is contained. Obedient subjection, reverence, and holy dread of offending him, a complete sense of dependence on him for all things ('if the Lord will!' I Cor. iv. 19), gratitude and love and trust — in short, everything that man can feel in the presence of God — comes to expression in this term. We can best perceive this in the benedictions at the opening of the epistles. Here 'grace and peace' are invoked or desired 'from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.' What is looked for from God can also be granted by the Lord. This inclusion of God and Christ in a single view which corresponds precisely with their coenthronement is characteristic of the piety of primitive Christianity. As Christians cry 'Abba Father' and pray to him, so there can be no doubt that they also 'prayed' in the strict sense of the word to Christ, not only in loyal adoration, but also in the form of petition. We have particular instances of this 'calling on the Lord' (Rom. x. 12) in Paul (II Cor. xii. 8) and in Stephen (Acts vii. 60). But such prayers were certainly made infinitely more often. Christians stand, therefore, in point of fact, over against Christ, as over against God (cf. 2 Clem. i. 1)."

And again, from Phil. ii. 9 ff. as a starting-point:[29]

> "Now not only is this word (*κύριος*) known in the general language of Hellenisticism, but it has a special history in the peculiar region of Jewish Hellenisticism. The Jews were taught to substitute

[28] "Christus," usw., (1909), pp. 24–25.

[29] "Christus," usw., (1909), pp. 27 f.

for the proper name of God, Jahwe, in the sacred text the expression Adonai (Lord). The Greek translators of the Old Testament were acting in the correct Jewish fashion when they replaced the name יהוה by κύριος, the frequently occurring combination יהוה האלהם by κύριος ὁ θεός that is, exactly, 'Lord, the God' (so also, Luke i. 32, 68, etc.). The κύριος without an article is felt almost as a proper name. When Luther represents it by 'God, the Lord,' it is on the contrary 'God' that he feels as a proper name. It is from this that the passage in the Epistle to the Philippians may be understood — all the more that there is a reminiscence here of passages like Isa. xlii. 8, xlv. 23: 'I am κύριος ὁ θεός, this is my name, my honor will I not give to another': 'to me shall every knee bow and every tongue confess God.' This name which God jealously guards as his own prerogative, he has now ceded to Christ, and has thereby publicly proclaimed that all beings shall bow to him and acknowledge him Lord. The transference of the name signifies, according to ancient usage, endowment with the power which the name designates. This passage is only another declaration of the transference to him by God of sovereignty over the world, of His constitution as 'Lord of Lords and King of Kings.' Thus the content of this passage coalesces in substance with what is said in Acts ii. 36 and intimated in I Cor. viii. 5. But whereas it is there to be understood that Christ alone rightly bears the name of κύριος, there is this much more intimated here — that κύριος is not merely a general designation of honor but the name of God become almost Christ's proper name. By this Christ is not merely elevated into a generally divine region: He takes the very place of the omnipotent God. Here, accordingly, κύριος cannot in any case have a weaker meaning than θεός."

Despite, however, such a clear perception of the high connotation of κύριος in the case of Paul (and the whole primitive Christian community), Johannes Weiss endeavors to interpret it, on Paul's lips, as expressive of something short of "God." He asserts (quite in the teeth of the facts, as we have seen) that Paul carefully avoids using the term "God" to denote Christ. Forgetting that with Paul, Christ (because — as nobody doubts — he is a two-natured person) is not only all that God is, but also all that man is, he appeals to

I Cor. iii. 23 to prove that Christ is dependent on God specifically with respect to his divine nature. He even points to I Cor. viii. 6 as implying this manner of subordination. Let us, however, hear him fully on this latter passage. He writes:[30]

> "What Paul understands [by the term 'Lord'] may be seen from I Cor. viii. 5. When he here grants that there are, in point of fact, many (certainly only so-called) 'Gods and Lords,' he means to say that there exist many (in his view demonic) beings to whom men render worship and adoration, calling upon them as God or Lord. In contrast with these many 'lords,' particularly perhaps to emperor worship, Christians acknowledge and venerate only the *one* *κύριος*, Jesus Christ (cf. Deissmann, 'Licht von Osten,' pp. 233 ff.). It would not be impossible — though there is no way certainly to prove it — that in Paul's sense the predicate 'Lords' stands a grade lower than 'Gods,' that he would recognize it as applied only to deified men, heroes, and gods of lower degree. In any event, speaking from the point of view of style, to the word 'Gods' in vs. 5 the 'God the Father' of vs. 6 corresponds; and to the word 'Lords' the 'Lord Jesus Christ.' Now there can be no doubt (and precisely our passage gives a distinct proof of it) that what Paul seeks to do is, in spite of Christ's position by God's side, to subordinate him again to God (so, e.g., II Cor. i. 3 when he calls God not only the Father but also 'the God of our Lord Jesus Christ': cf. Eph. i. 17; Jno. xx. 17). And thus it were possible that he took over all the more readily the name *κύριος* derived by him from the primitive community, because he could express by it, no doubt, the divine position of Christ and the divine veneration due to him, and yet draw a line by means of which the interval between Christ and God should remain protected."

It certainly is surprising to find Weiss suggesting here that Paul may be using the term "Lord" after a heathen fashion to designate only gods of lower degree; we have just seen him solidly proving that, in its application to Christ, at least, Paul employs it in a sense in which it is not capable of discrimination from "God." For the same reason it is surprising to find him suggesting here that one of Paul's motives in applying to Christ the term "Lord" may perhaps have been to avoid confounding him with God. And in view of Paul's doctrine of the Two Natures (which Weiss does not in the least question) it is still further surprising to find him adducing here the circumstance that Paul sometimes speaks of God as the "God," as well as the Father, "of our Lord Jesus Christ" as throwing doubt on his ascription of proper deity to Christ's divine nature — a procedure which one would think would have been rendered impossible by the circumstance (to which Weiss himself calls attention) that the same mode of speech occurs in John, where, at least, Weiss does not doubt Christ is simply God. Finally, how little I Cor. viii. 5, 6 itself can be supposed to suggest the subordination of the "Lord" Jesus Christ as to His deity to "God" the Father, becomes evident at once on our noting that the two — the one Lord Jesus Christ and the one God the Father — are represented here as together constituting that God of which it is emphatically declared there is but one. For it is precisely in exposition of his energetic assertion in verse 4, in contradiction of all polytheistic points of view, that "there is no God, except *one*," that Paul declares that Christians recognize that there is only "one God the Father and one Lord Jesus Christ." By as much as it is certain that he did not intend to represent the Christians themselves as polytheists, worshiping, like the rest, deity in grades, but, in contrast with all polytheists, as worshipers of but one Deity, it is clear that he did not intend to assign to Christ the position of a secondary deity. Obviously to him the "one God the Father" and "the one Lord Jesus Christ" were in some high and true sense alike included in that one God who alone is recognized as existing.

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[30] "Christus," usw., p. 26.

This energetic assertion of monotheism by Paul, combined with a provision within it for at least some kind of dualism, leads us to revert for a moment to the closing clauses of the first extract we quoted from Johannes Weiss.[31] There Weiss, having recognized for the Johannine writings and the Pastoral

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[31] Above, pp. 267–268.

Epistles[32] — what he would not recognize for Paul — that in them Christ is directly called "God" with the fullest meaning, seeks to account for this by suggesting that these "late New Testament writings" may have lapsed from the strictness of Jewish monotheism under the influence of Hellenistic modes of thought, and thus have been enabled to place a second God by the side of God the Father in a sense still impossible to Paul. On the face of it, however, it certainly does not appear that there has been any falling away from the highest monotheism in their case; monotheism is rather the presupposition of all their teaching (Jno. v. 44; xvii. 3; I Tim. i. 17; ii. 5; vi. 15). It is Weiss' method which is again at fault. Whatever conclusion may seem valid to him he obtrudes without more ado upon the New Testament writers, although their point of view obviously differs from his by a whole diameter. On his frankly Socinian postulates,[33] it may seem clear that where two are God there cannot be one God only. He therefore at once declares that the monotheism of John and the author of the Pastoral Epistles, who recognize at least two as God, is clearly falling into decay. But the Socinian postulates, dear to Weiss, have not determined the point of view of these writers! Their ascription of proper deity to Christ, therefore, in no wise imperils the purity of their monotheism; no monotheism, however strict, could inhibit the fullest recognition of the proper deity of Christ with writers whose fundamental thought runs on the lines on which their thought runs, and the ascription of a purer monotheism than theirs to Paul, on the ground that they look upon the deity of Christ as proper and supreme, is nothing but a gratuitous prejudicing of the case. In point of fact, Paul stands precisely on the same level with them as with respect to the doctrine of God, so with respect to the doctrine of Christ. Every line of his epistles is vocal with the cry of Thomas, "My Lord and my God"; for the Epistle to the Romans as truly as for the Epistle to Titus, Christ is "our great God and Savior"; to the Epistle to the Philippians as fully as to the First Epistle of John, Christ is "the true God," that is to say, he fills out and perfectly satisfies the whole idea of God—for that is as distinctly the connotation of ὑπάρχων ἐν μορφῇ θεοῦ as it is of ὁ ἀληθινὸς θεός.

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[32] For Weiss treats the Pastoral Epistles together as the work of one author, described as "a pupil of Paul." Even in their case, however, though admitting their high Christology, Weiss throws out a gratuitous expression of doubt as to the integrity of the text in which this high Christology finds its most precise expression. He writes ("Christus," usw., pp. 68–69; Schiele's "Religion," usw., i. coll. 1732–1733): "Although, therefore, the author energetically emphasizes that Jesus was *man,* he holds at the same time fast to his divine origin — yes (if we have the right text), he calls him (Tit. ii. 13) precisely 'our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.' But even if we must read or explain this text otherwise, there is *one* expression, which our author uses with predilection, that will give us light. He speaks (II Tim. i. 10) of the 'epiphany' of the Savior. Every Greek reader must have understood this well-known term in the sense that Jesus Christ is a God appearing in human form on earth. It was thus that the epiphany of a God was spoken of, when he appeared to men to command perhaps the building of a temple, or the establishment of a festival, or to confer benefactions: thus Antiochus IV of Syria was called 'Epiphanes' as a God walking on the earth; and so the expression on the lips of our author means just *the incarnation of a God.*"

[33] Cf. his "Paulus und Jesus" (1909), pp. 4–5, where, describing two forms of "Christianity," one of which is "Christ-religion" and worships Christ, and the other is "God-religion" and worships God alone, only permitting itself to be led by Jesus of Nazareth "to the Father," he adds: "I make no secret of my profession, in company with the majority of recent theologians, of the second of these views. . . . But as a historian I must declare it widely different from the dominant view of primitive Christianity, from the Pauline view."

Weiss

Paul = John on Xology

The attempt to separate Paul's doctrine of Christ from John's as something essentially different, therefore, utterly fails. It is much more plausible to expound John's doctrine as a mere copy of Paul's. There is considerable appearance of reasonableness, for example, in P. Wernle's representation that the significance of John's Gospel consists merely in its "bridging the chasm between Jesus and Paul and transferring the Pauline gospel back into the discourses and life-delineation of Jesus."[34] Was it not precisely through this transposition, indeed, he asks, that Paulinism first attained to dominance in the church? The trouble with this representation, however, is twofold: it ascribes distinctively to Paul what was the common doctrine of the whole church; and it credits particularly to John a service which had already been rendered — if it needed to be rendered — by the Synoptics. For the difficulty of construing Paul's Christology in lower terms than that of John is fairly matched by the difficulty of construing the Christology of the other writers of the New Testament in lower terms than that of Paul. The attempt has most frequently been made with respect to the Synoptic Gospels, and among them probably most persistently with respect to Mark. We have often been told that in that "oldest of the Gospels" — the first attempt to sketch a narrative "life of Christ" — we have a portrait of the human Christ, unfalsified as yet by "dogmatic elements." From this ineptitude, it is to be hoped, we have now been conclusively delivered, more especially through its trenchant exposure by Wrede, who, whatever else he did, certainly made it abundantly clear that what we have in the Gospel of Mark is far from what has been called a "primitive document" presenting a "primitive" view of the Person of Christ.[35] The highest astonishment is accordingly being now expressed from every quarter that it could ever have been imagined that documents written in "the sixties," or at least in "the fifties," could fail to reflect the high Christology which, as we know from Paul's letters, was at that time the established faith of the whole Christian community.[36] In any

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[34] "Die Anfänge unserer Religion"[2] (1904), pp. 446–449. Wernle, of course, does not deny that certain "modifications" were made in Paul's doctrine when it was taken over by John. While the groundwork remains the same, yet in John the *life* of Christ among men comes more to its rights, alongside of his death, and is filled with a positive content of divine revelation. The sole *deviation* from Paul's point of view which he finds in John, however, is that the earthly life of Jesus is conceived by John more under the category

Mark

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of exaltation than of humiliation — and this came to John from the Synoptics. He is constrained to add, however: "It must be said, nevertheless, that the Pauline Christology harmonizes admirably with the Johannine supplement, and acquires by it its convincing power." Cf. the sound criticism of Wernle by Jules Lebreton, "Les Origines du dogme de la Trinité" (1910), p. 376: "There is, no doubt, between John and Paul, a basis of identical doctrine which has become the common doctrine of the church; but there are also in the case of each of them doctrinal aspects which are purely individual, and by which they are profoundly distinguished from one another."

[35] Wrede, "Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien" (1901).

[36] So far, at least, agreement is perfect among writers otherwise of polar divergence. H. Bavinck ("Gereformeerde Dogmatiek,"^{2} iii. p. 284) remarks:

event the Christology of the Synoptic Gospels is indistinguishable from that of Paul, and this is as true of the Christology of Mark as of that of Matthew or of Luke. We do not ourselves look upon Mark as "the primitive Gospel";[37] we do not even subscribe to the now almost universal opinion that it is the earliest of our three Synoptics; we agree with Johannes Weiss in assigning it to 64–68 A.D., but for reasons of our own we place it quite at the end of this period; we agree with Harnack in thinking Luke certainly as old as this and much more likely as old as 63 A.D., or even as 58–60 A.D.; and Matthew, we are sure, is as old as Mark and may very well be as old as Luke; we should find no serious difficulty, indeed, in placing both Matthew and Luke early in the "fifties." But the brevity, and, so to say, relative externality, of Mark naturally suggest it as the particular one of the Synoptics in which

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"It is the same Christ who meets us throughout the whole New Testament. How could it be otherwise? The Synoptic Gospels are just as truly apostolic writings as the letters of Paul and were written even later than Paul's letters; there is nowhere any suggestion of a controversy among the apostles over the Person of Christ." J. Weiss says of Mark's Gospel particularly ("Christus," usw., p. 74): "That the evangelist takes his start from a distinct Christology is certain — how could it be otherwise with a writer who presupposes the work of Paul and is writing down after the death of the first apostolic generation the 'Gospel of Jesus Christ' for the practical use of the mission to the heathen?" And then of the Synoptics at large (p. 73): "None of their authors was an eye-witness and all belong to the second generation, whose care it was to preserve the precious possession which had been intrusted to it"; "they all start, with respect to the dogmatic-christological positions, no longer at the standpoint of the first community: the exaltation-Christology has long [this in the fifties or sixties!] been transcended, and in its place there has stepped, as with Paul, the Incarnation-Christology."

[37] Cf. J. Weiss, "Jesus von Nazareth" (1910), p. 135: "Mark is anything but a first draftsman of the tradition; he is rather an eclectic reworker of old traditions; his book is not a source but a receptacle (*Sammelbecken*)"; also, "Das älteste Evangelium" (1903), p. 2: "As firmly as I am convinced that we have in Mark the oldest *Gospel,* I can as little agree that it presents the first and original cast (*Niederschlag*) of the evangelical tradition. So far as I can judge, Mark is already a station on the road which ends in John's Gospel, not the commencement of that road. It is no longer a source but a receptacle (*Sammelbecken*). The tradition which precedes it and which has received literary form in it was no longer fluid and unfixed but had reached already a relatively fixed shape."

the Christology common to them all is likely to be expressed in, if not its lowest, yet at least its least-elaborated terms; and it is not unnatural, therefore, that it has been scrutinized with especial care with a view to determining the real nature of the synoptic conception of Christ. The result has been to make it perfectly plain that the Synoptic conception of the Person of Christ is just that doctrine of the Two Natures which, as we have seen, is given expression in Paul's Epistles and is everywhere presupposed in them as the established faith of the Christians of the middle of the first century, and of any earlier date to which the retrospective testimony of this body of Epistles may be allowed to extend.

"The Christology of the Gospel of Mark [writes Johannes Weiss] [38] is already given expression in the title: his gospel treats of Jesus Christ (the Son of God, in case these last words are genuine). . . . The particularly designating names of Jesus are for him 'the Son of God' and 'the Son of Man.' When the evangelist so frequently places the latter of these in the mouth of Jesus as a self-designation, he thus betrays that he no longer possesses any sense of the suitability of this name exclusively for the heavenly Messiah, whether as pre-existent or as exalted. For him it is precisely the Jesus who walks the earth who is no other than the 'heavenly Man,' who came down from heaven, and has been again exalted to heaven (xv. 62), whence he is to come again in the clouds with great power and glory (xiii. 26). Accordingly he makes Jesus call himself the Son of Man even when he is speaking of his earthly activity (ii. 10, 28; x. 45), of his sufferings (e.g., viii. 31), and of his resurrection (ix. 9). He was in this already preceded by the Discourses-source (Mt. xi. 9 = Lk. vii. 34) and Matthew carried still farther this replacement of an 'I' in the mouth of Jesus by 'the Son of Man' (cf. Mt. xvi. 13 with Mk. viii. 27). This use of the name is an altogether sufficient proof that, just like Paul, Mark looked upon Jesus as the 'Man' who came from heaven. Similarly it cannot be doubted that this post-Pauline writer understood, as

[38] "Christus," usw., pp. 75–76, and Schiele's "Religion," usw., i. coll. 1734–1735; cf. the further discussion in "Das älteste Evangelium" (1903), pp. 45 ff., 96 ff., where he particularly shows that from the christological doctrine of John "our Gospel of Mark does not stand far"; that "the Christology of Mark stands much nearer that of John than is commonly allowed," etc.

Paul understood it, the name 'Son of God,' which stood perhaps in the title of his gospel as the most significant name of dignity — that is to say, not in the theocratic sense, examined above (pp. 19 ff.), of him who has been chosen and called to the messianic kingship, but (p. 34) of him who was the sole one among men that, of his nature, bears in himself the essence (*Wesen*) of God.

Of course Weiss would distinguish shades of view among the several writers — the authors of the Gospels severally and Paul — but his testimony to the main matter is quite distinct; that, in a word, to the author of Mark, as to all the others of these writers, Christ was, as he himself puts it, "a divine being 'incarnated' — we must already make use of this expression — in a man."[39] And it will be found impossible to make this divine being, with Mark any more than with Paul, anything less than the supreme God himself. When Mark records our Lord himself as testifying that he is, in the hierarchy of being, above even the angels, he places him outside the category of created beings; and there is no reason to doubt that with him as truly as with all his Jewish compatriots the Son of God which he repeatedly calls Jesus connoted, as John defines the phrase for us (v. 18), just "equality with God."

Weiss

It is not necessary to labor the point. It is undeniable that the Christ of the whole body of New Testament writers, without exception, is a Two-Natured Person — divine and human; and indeed this is scarcely any longer denied. Whatever attempts are still made to discriminate between the Christologies of the New Testament writers fall within the limits of this common doctrine. Wilhelm von Schnehen does not go one whit beyond the facts of the case when he declares,[40] no doubt after a fashion and with implications derived from his own point of view:

> "Go back into the history of Christianity as far as you will, you will nowhere find the least support for the notion that Jesus was

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[39] "Christus," usw., p. 77.

[40] "Der moderne Jesuskultus"^{2} (1907), pp. 10–11.

> revered on the ground of his purely human activity and attributes, say as the founder of a religion, as teacher of morals, or even only as religious-ethical example. Understand the content of the word ‘gospel’ as you may, never has it to do with a mere ‘man’ Jesus, never does it give to this the central place in Christian worship. For the glad-tidings of the Rabbi of Nazareth, even the adorers of his human personality will not in the end deny this. That it is valid also for the Gospel-writings of the New Testament is equally indubitable. The Jesus of which these writings tell us is through and through not a man but at the very least a super-man. Yes, he is more than that; he is the unique Son of God; the Christ, the coming God-man of the orthodox church. For the Fourth Gospel this is, of course, universally recognized; the Johannine Jesus is an incarnate creative word, the human manifestation of the ‘Logos,’ who from the beginning was with God and himself was God, whose divine glory was continuously apparent to his disciples, beneath its earthly shell. But the other Gospels also think of nothing so little as telling us of a mere ‘man’ Jesus, and demanding a believing reverence for such a one. No, the miraculously begotten Son of the Virgin with Luke and Matthew, the Jesus who rose from the dead and ascended into heaven of the First and Third Gospels, is just as little a mere ‘natural man’ as the Johannine Christ. And as regards finally the Gospel of Mark, Professor Bousset, for example, remarks: ‘It is already from the standpoint of faith that the oldest Gospel is written; already for Mark Jesus is not only the Messiah of the Jewish people but’ (in consequence of the communication of the Spirit at the baptism!) ‘the miraculous, eternal Son of God whose glory shines into this world. And it has been rightly emphasized that in this respect our three first Gospels differ from the Fourth only in degree.’”

Bousset

The comment which is made on this and similar utterances of recent radicalism, by Richard Grützmacher[41] is eminently justified:

> “The immense significance of this acknowledgment can be measured only by one who knows the unnumbered theological and extra-theological attempts of the last century and a half from the extremest left to far into the circle of the mediating theology to

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[41] “Ist das liberale Jesusbild modern?”⁵ (1907), pp. 29, 30.

obtain from the New Testament itself, or at least from the three first Gospels, a purely human portrait of Jesus, and to eliminate all metaphysical and supernatural content from their expressions. The 'modern' and the church interpretation of the New Testament at the beginning of the twentieth century — to which also in very large measure the later 'Liberalism' gives its adhesion — is in complete accord in this result: that the church-doctrine of the God-man Christ can appeal with full right to the New Testament in its entire compass, and any development beyond that which has taken place is only formal. The allegorizing-dogmatic exegesis of the last hundred and fifty years has been transcended."[42]

Grützmach
(Bousset
weiss 28

That is to say, the doctrine of the Two Natures of Christ is not merely the synthesis of the teaching of the New Testament, but the conception which underlies every one of the New Testament writings severally; it is not only the teaching of the New Testament as a whole but of the whole of the New Testament, part by part. Historically, this means that not only has the doctrine of the Two Natures been the invariable presupposition of the whole teaching of the church from the apostolic age down, but all the teaching of the apostolic age rests on it as its universal presupposition. When Christian literature begins, this is already the common assumption of the entire church. If we wish to translate this into the terms of positive chronology, what must be said is that before the opening of the sixth decade of the first century (for we suppose that I Thess. must be dated somewhere about 52 A.D.), the doctrine of the Two Natures already is firmly established in the church as the universal foundation of all Christian thinking concerning Christ. Such a mere chronological statement, however, hardly does justice to the case. What needs to be emphasized is that there is no Christian literature in existence which does not base itself, as upon an already firmly laid foundation, on the doctrine of the Two Natures. So far as Christian literature can bear testimony, there never has been any other doctrine recognized in the church. This literature itself goes back to within twenty years or so of the death of Christ; and of course — since it did not create but reflects this faith — has a retrospective value as testimony to the faith of Christians.

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[42] Grützmacher very properly, in a note (p. 30), cries out on "the marvelous anachronism and self-deception" of which Julius Kaftan is guilty when he represents that in the portrait of the God-man, "it is the unhistorical interpretation of the New Testament, dominated by ecclesiastical dogma, that is working" ("Jesus und Paulus," p. 59). Over against this he sets A. Kalthoff ("Enstehung," usw., p. 9): "From the ecclesiastical God-man there leads a straight line backward through the epistles and gospels of the New Testament to the Apocalypse of Daniel in which the ecclesiastical type of the portrait of Jesus took its beginning."

Nevertheless, men still seek to posit an "earlier," "more primitive," "simpler" view of the Person of Christ, behind this oldest attested doctrine. In another article we shall ask whether it is possible thus to go back of the doctrine of the New Testament writings to a more "primitive" view of the Person of Christ.

II. THE NEW TESTAMENT JESUS THE ONLY REAL JESUS

In a former article[1] we have pointed out that the doctrine of the "Two Natures" is the common presupposition of the whole body of the New Testament writings — a presupposition which is everywhere built upon, and which comes to clear enunciation wherever occasion calls for it. The literature gathered into the New Testament is not only the earliest Christian literature which has come down to us, but goes back to within twenty years or so of the death of Christ; and since it did not create but reflects the faith it expresses, it must be allowed to possess a retrospective significance in its unbroken testimony to the belief of Christians. What the whole Christian community is found to be resting in, with complete assurance, as the truth respecting the person of its founder in, say, 50 A.D. — a time when a large number of his personal followers were doubtless still living, and certainly the tradition of which they were bearers (cf. Lk. i. 2) cannot have become obscured

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[1] *The American Journal of Theology*, July, 1911, pp. 337 ff.

— can scarcely fail to have been the aboriginal belief of the Christian body. Nevertheless, a determined effort is still made to discover an "earlier," "more primitive," "simpler" view of the person of Christ behind the oldest attested doctrine. There is confessedly no "direct" evidence of the existence of any such "earlier," "more primitive," "simpler" view. "Of the religion of the earliest Jewish-Christian community," says Johannes Weiss, as he enters upon the exposition of "the faith of the primitive community,"[2] "we have no *direct* witnesses; for we can, today, no longer consider the Epistles of Peter and James genuine works of the primitive apostles" — largely, it needs to be remembered, because they do not contain the "more primitive" Christology which it is assumed these "primitive apostles" must have cherished. But it is thought that by means of indirect evidence, the existence in the first age of Christianity of an earlier view of Christ than any which has found record in the New Testament may be established. The whole mass of expressions of which the New Testament writers make use in speaking of Christ, is subjected to a searching scrutiny with a view to discovering among them, if possible, "survivals" of an "earlier" mode of thinking of Christ. Weiss accordingly continues:

Weiss argu
in circle

> "For this pre-Pauline epoch also we are first of all directed to the letters of Paul. He occasionally speaks of having received something from the primitive community (I Cor. xv. 3 ff.). But more important still are the numerous elements of the oldest primitive-Christian conceptions which without expressly notifying the fact he carries along in his theology, and which betray themselves to the eye of the investigator as a universal-Christian stratum underlying the more Hellenistically colored specifically-Pauline doctrine. Similarly, all the other documents of the Apostolic and post-Apostolic age contain such old Christian traits, which point back to the standpoint of the oldest community. Thereto we reckon especially the discourses in the first part of Acts. Though they may have come from a later time, yet, precisely in their Christology, they contain very antique conceptions."

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[2] "Christus," usw., p. 7.

What is attempted, it will be seen, is on subjective grounds — there are, in the circumstances, none other available — to distinguish, among the New Testament deliverances concerning Christ, those which belong to the primitive age from those which belong to the age when the books were written. The whole New Testament is doubtless laid under contribution for this purpose, but the happy hunting-ground of the quest is found in the early chapters of the Acts and in the Synoptic Gospels.

It is not without the clearest justification that we have emphasized the purely subjective grounding of this quest. If we possessed a single Christian document earlier in date than those which constitute our New Testament, in which was taught the special Christology which it is proposed to extract from our New Testament as an earlier form of belief than that which the New Testament itself universally commends to us, there might be some excuse for gathering out of our New Testament books the sentences and forms of expression which semed to fall particularly in with the teachings of this earlier document and pronouncing them survivals of its earlier modes of thought. But in the absence of any such earlier document, what reason is there for pronouncing these forms of expression "survivals"? The touchstone by which their "earlier" character is determined, Weiss tells us, resides in "the searcher's eye." That is to say, shortly, in the critic's *a priori* paradigms. The critic comes to his task with a settled conviction, *a priori* established, that Jesus was a mere man, and must have been thought of by his followers as a mere man; and sets himself to search out in the extant literature — which is informed by a contrary conviction — modes of expression which he can interpret as "survivals" of such an "earlier" point of view. Meanwhile, there is no evidence whatever that these modes of expression are "survivals," or that there ever existed in the Christian community an "earlier" view of the person of Christ than that given expression in the New Testament writings. Reinhold Seeberg has quite accurately expounded the state of the case when, speaking more particularly of Harnack's unfortunate attempt to distinguish in primitive Christianity an "adoptionist" and a "pneumatic" Christology, he says:[3]

> "Investigators, in my opinion, are as a rule misled by this — that they make the 'historical Jesus' their starting-point by simple assumption, and treat all expressions which go beyond this as attributes added to him in gradual precipitation on the ground of faith in his resurrection. The historical starting-point is, however, in reality contained in three facts: (1) that Jesus in his earthly life manifested a superhuman self-consciousness; (2) that his disciples were convinced by him, *after* his resurrection, not precisely *by* it, that they had directly experienced and received proof of his divine nature; and (3) that they accordingly honored and proclaimed him as the heavenly Spirit-Lord. These facts are, in my opinion, indisputable, and from these facts as a starting-point — they are simply 'given' and not deducible — the entire thought-development can be fully explained."

When the study of historical records is approached with a fixed assumption of an opposite point of view to their own as instrument of interpretation, it is not strange if their representations are replaced by a set of contradictory representations. But the "results" thus reached are not in any recognizable sense "historical." They are the product of wresting history in order to fill in a foregone conclusion of abstract thought.[4]

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[3] "Lehrbuch der Dogmengeschichte,"^{2} i. p. 104. Seeberg, of course, only repeats in this what has been clearly pointed out from the beginning. Thus E. K. A. Riehm, "Der Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes (1867), p. 332, remarks: "That it is only on the basis of his well-known false preconception to the effect that the *original* Christian conception of the person of Christ was an Ebionitish one, that Schwegler refers the declarations as to the exaltation of the person of Christ to a mere effort, to a *tendency,* while he refers the declarations as to the likeness of Christ to men to the *tradition,* we note only in passing."

[4] Cf. Albert Schweitzer's characterization of this method of criticism in an analogous field ("The Quest of the Historical Jesus," pp. 330–331): "In order to find in Mark the life of Jesus of which it is in search, modern theology is obliged to read between the lines a whole host of things, and those often the most important, and then to foist them upon the text by means of a psychological conjecture. It is determined to find evidence in Mark of a development of Jesus. . . . Mark knows nothing of any development in

It should not pass without very particular notice that the forms of expression gathered from our New Testament books, out of which is to be fashioned an "earlier" Christology than that presupposed by this literature, do not lie on the face of the New Testament as alien fragments. It is not without significance that Johannes Weiss, after remarking that Paul occasionally puts forward statements as derived by him from "the primitive community," at once adds that, for the purpose of reconstructing the faith of this "earlier community" from Paul's writings, "survivals" in his writings not expressly notified as such are both more numerous and more important. In other words, our New Testament writers who have preserved for us the elements of this "earlier" Christology wholly different from their own, and indeed contradictory to it, have preserved them with the most engaging unconsciousness of their alien character: in point of fact, they have written down these contradictory sentences with no other thought than that they were the just expression of their own proper views; and they betray no sense of embarrassment whatever with respect to them. This is true even — or perhaps we should say, especially — of the extreme case of the record of Peter's christological utterances in the earlier chapters of the Book of Acts. It is quite clear that Luke is wholly unaware that he is recording views of his Lord which differ from his own, which, indeed, are in sharp conflict with his own and, to speak frankly, stultify his entire attitude toward his Lord, for the validation of which his whole great two-part work was written.

Jesus. . . . Another hitherto self-evident point — the historical kernel which it has been customary to extract from the narratives — must be given up, until it is proved, if it is capable of proof, that we can and ought to distinguish between the kernel and the husk. . . . Whatever the results obtained by the aid of the historical kernel, the method pursued is the same; 'it is detached from the context and transformed into something different.' 'It finally comes to this,' says Wrede, 'that each critic retains whatever portion of the traditional sayings can be fitted into his construction of the facts and his conception of historical possibility and rejects the rest.' The psychological explanation of motive and the psychological connection of the events and actions which such critics proposed to find in Mark, simply do not exist. That being so, nothing is to be made out of his account by the application of a priori psychology."

Luke-Ac

We may well ask whether such unconscious *naïveté* can be attributed to such an alert writer as Luke shows himself to be. Or if with Schmiedel[5] we deny these chapters to Luke and suppose the speeches of Peter "free compositions" of a later author, the *tour de force* which we attribute to this great nameless dramatist rises quite to the level of the miraculous. It is hardly worth while to ask similarly whether Paul, in his fervid expressions of reverence to Christ as "Lord," can be supposed with such simplicity to mix in with his own language, so vividly expressive of this reverence, other forms of speech standing in flat contradiction to all that he was proclaiming, merely because he found them in use in "the primitive community." Surely the Epistle to the Galatians does not encourage us to believe Paul to have been filled with such blind veneration for "the primitive community," that he would be likely to continue to repeat its language in devout subjection to the authority of its modes of statement, though it ran counter to his profoundest convictions and his most fervent religious feelings.

Paul

Synoptic

The general point we are endeavoring to make deserves some elaboration with special reference to the Synoptic Gospels. It is particularly behind their narrative that the traces of an earlier conception of the person of Christ than that presented by our whole New Testament — inclusive of these Gospels — are supposed to be discoverable. It is frankly allowed, as we have seen, that the Gospels as they stand present to our view a divine Christ, an incarnated Son of God, who came to earth on a mission, and whose whole earthly life is only an episode in the existence of a Heavenly Being. But it is immediately added that in the narrative put together from this standpoint, there are imbedded elements of an earlier tradition, to which Jesus was a mere man, bounded by all human limitations. And it is assumed to be precisely the task of criticism to identify and draw out these elements of earlier tradition, that we may recover from them the idea formed of Jesus by his real contemporaries and, therefore, presumably, the true conception of him before he was transformed by the

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[5] "Encyclopaedia Biblica," i. pp. 47–49; see the allusion above, p. 287.

iterary
criticism

reverent thought of his followers into an exalted Being, to be which he himself made no claim. We say nothing now of purely "literary criticism"—the attempt to ascertain the sources on which our Gospels as literary compositions rest, and from which they draw their materials. For this "literary criticism" in no way advances the discovery of a "more primitive" Christology lying behind that presented by the authors of our Gospels. It would have been a strange proceeding indeed had the authors of our Gospels elected to draw their materials, by preference, from earlier documents presenting a totally different, or, rather, sharply contrasting conception of Jesus from that which they had in heart and mind to commend to their readers; and they are obviously wholly unaware of doing anything of the kind. Happily, we are delivered from the necessity of considering the possibility of such a literary phenomenon. It is no doubt impossible to reconstruct any of the sources which "have found their graves" in our Gospels with full confidence, with respect either to the details of their contents or even to their general compass. But neither the "narrative source"—the so-called *Urmarkus*—which underlies all three of the Synoptics, nor the "discourses-source"—the so-called "Logia"—which underlies the common portions of Matthew and Luke not found also in Mark, on any rational theory of its compass and contents, differs in any respect in its christological point of view from that of the Gospels, so large a portion of which they constitute.[6] We may remark in passing that this carries the evidence for the aboriginality in the Christian community of the two-natured conception of Christ back a literary generation behind the Synoptics themselves; and that surely must bring us to a time which can scarcely be thought to be wholly dominated by Paul's innovating influence. It is enough for us here to note, however, that "literary criticism" does not take us back to documents presenting a "pre-Pauline" Christology. If such a "pre-Pauline" Christology is to be found in the background of our Gospels, much coarser methods of reaching it than "literary criticism" must be employed.

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[6] We have already seen above (p. 282) Johannes Weiss incidentally noting the use in the "discourses-source" of the "Son of Man," of Christ: of course, the same use occurs in the *Urmarkus*, however it be reconstructed. But the general point is easily demonstrable in detail.

Pillar Passa

The absurd attempt of P. W. Schmiedel to reverse the conception of Christ transmitted to us by the Gospels, by insisting that, in the first instance, we must trust only such passages as are — or rather, as, when torn from their contexts, may be made to seem — inconsistent with the main purpose of the evangelists in writing their Gospels, namely, to honor Christ, is only an unusually crass application of the method which from the beginning has been common to the whole body of those who, like him, are in search of evidence in the Gospels of the existence of a "more primitive" tradition than that which the Gospels themselves represent. The essence of this method is the attempt to discover in the Gospel-narrative elements in the delineation of Jesus which are inconsistent with the conception of Jesus which it is their purpose to convey; to which unassimilated elements of a different tradition, preference is at once given in point of both age and trustworthiness. This method is as freely in use, for instance, by Johannes Weiss, who seems to wish to separate himself from Schmiedel,[7] as by Schmiedel himself. Let us note how Weiss deals with the matter:[8]

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[7] Or can Weiss not have Schmiedel in mind in writing as follows ("Jesus von Nazareth," 1910, p. 93): "What mandate of the historical method, however, tells us that the interested parties [*die Betheiligten*] are to be distrusted under all circumstances? There no doubt still exist people to whom the declarations of a pious man are antecedently suspicious. We need not argue with them; they have been born a century and a half too late. They simply neglect a moral duty when they deny to those who differ with them the same bona fides they make claim to for themselves. The truly unprejudiced man will say: 'With reference to the nature of a personality we shall always reach ultimately a clearer notion along with those who have surrendered themselves to his influence than with those whom either hate has made blind, or who have simply taken no interest in him. It is possible to think the reverence shown him excessive and to draw back from many things his friends say of him: yet certain fundamental traits are here most surely to be found.'"

Weiss vs. Schmiede

[8] "Jesus von Nazareth," usw., pp. 132–133. It is perhaps worth while to observe how Riehm, in a passage which has already been adverted to ("Der Lehrbegriff des Hebräerbriefes" [1867], pp. 331–332), already deals with this

"The Christology of the evangelist himself [he is speaking of Mark] is very far advanced in the direction of the Johannine; there can be no doubt that Jesus is to him the Son of God, in the sense of a divine being with divine power and divine knowledge from the beginning on. Nothing is hidden from him: his own destiny, the denial, the betrayal, the fate of Jerusalem — he tells it all exactly beforehand. Nothing is impossible to him: the most marvelous healings, like the sudden cure of the withered hand, of leprosy, of blindness, are performed by him without any difficulty; he raises

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sort of criticism as applied by Schwegler to the Epistle to the Hebrews: "The two kinds of expression, set side by side, stand in remarkable contrast. Now it is said that the Son as the effulgence of the glory of God possesses the fulness of God's essential glory, then again that like us he partakes of flesh and blood; now that he is eternal and unchangeable, then again that he is like us in all things; now he is exalted high above all men, and even above angels and set in an absolutely unique relation to God, then again he is placed on the level of men and set forth as standing in a human relation to God; there is no trait in the nature of God which is not found also in the nature of the Son, and yet it is only through severe conflicts of suffering that he struggles to attain the highest stage of moral-religious perfection; he upholds all things by the word of his power, and yet he is subjected to the cruelest sufferings and the death of the cross. With an eye on these contrasts it is easy to understand how Schwegler came to the contention (ii. p. 388): 'We perceive still in the Christology of the Epistle to the Hebrews the lack of harmony which belongs to the first beginnings; we meet everywhere with an unreconciled contradiction of the two constitutive elements of the person of Christ, the human and the divine in him, his subordination beneath the Father, and his co-ordination and consubstantiality with the Father. In spite of the visible effort which the author makes to bring the divine in Christ to its highest possible and most specific expression, there presses continually forward the traditional human conception of the person.' This contention is, however, thoroughly false. That it is only on the basis of his well-known false presupposition that the *original* Christian conception of the person of Christ was an Ebionitish one, that Schwegler refers the declarations of the exaltation of the person of Christ to a mere effort, to a *tendency*, while he refers the declarations of the likeness of Christ to men to the *tradition*, we note only in passing. But even apart from this, do these two kinds of declarations really stand in an unreconciled contradiction to one another? The author makes it very clear that in his own consciousness the conciliation of the two modes of conceiving Christ, as the Son of God and as true man, was fully carried out, when in v. 8 he expressly says that the sonship to God and the learning of obedience through suffering in no way (as might be thought) exclude one another. It is accordingly clear to him that Christ *on earth* could be God's Son, and true man *at the same time;* that he was both in *one* person."

a dead person; he walks on the water, and feeds thousands with a few loaves; he makes the fig tree wither — it is all related as if nothing else could be expected; we see in these accounts neither the bold faith to which all is possible nor the enthusiasm of one beside himself, nor natural intermediation; Jesus can do just anything. And therefore, to the evangelist, it is nothing singular that at his death the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent; and that he left the grave on the third day — all this follows altogether naturally and of itself from his Christology. But alongside of these stand other traits: his power rests on the Spirit, which was communicated to him at baptism; we see how this Spirit struggles with the spirits (i. 25, iii. 11, v. 6, 8, ix. 25 f.); his miraculous power is limited by unbelief (vi. 5), he must have faith himself and find faith in others if he is to help; his dominion over suffering and death has its limits; he trembles and is afraid, and feels forsaken by God; he is ignorant of the day and hour; he will not permit himself to be called 'Good Master'; he prays to the Father like a man, and is subject to all human emotions, even anger, and to mistake with reference to his disciples."

The whole art of the presentation is apparent. Weiss would make it appear that there are two Jesuses in Mark's narrative, a divine Jesus and a human Jesus; and if we take the one, he suggests, the other must be left. Mark himself believed in the divine Jesus; the human Jesus, which he places by His side, must therefore be the "earlier" Jesus, to which he has been so accustomed that he cannot away with him even when he would. The astonishing thing, however, is that Mark is entirely unconscious of the straits he is in. He records the human traits, which are supposed to refute the whole portraiture he is endeavoring to draw, with no sense of their incongruity. For, "we must . . . remember," as Dr. Percy Gardner admonishes us,[9] "that the three Gospels are not mere colourless biographies, but collections of such parts of the Christian tradition as most impressed a society which had already begun to seek in the life of its founder traces of a more than human origin and nature." They are, to put it more accurately, presentations of the salient acts and sayings of Jesus by men who thoroughly believed in the divine Christ, and who wished — as Dr. Gardner says of Paul, the master of two of these evangelists — to "place the human life of Jesus between two periods of celestial exaltation." Why then did these men, of all men, preserve elements of an earlier tradition which contradict their own deepest convictions of the origin and nature of their Lord? Is it because they lacked literary skill to convey the picture they were intent on conveying, and so, as Dr. Gardner puts it, in their attempt to depict the Jesus they believed in, the "human legend was not effaced, but it was supplemented here and there with incongruous elements"? Surely, the day is long since past when our Gospels can be treated thus as *naïve* narratives by childlike hands endeavoring only to set down the few facts concerning Christ which had come to their knowledge. If these elements of "the human legend" were retained, it was, on the contrary, precisely because they presented to the consciousness of these writers no incongruity with their conceptions of the divine Christ; and that is as much as to say that the Jesus whom they were depicting was in their view no less truly human than truly divine. The life of the Master on earth, which they placed between the two periods of celestial exaltation, bore for them the traits of a truly human life.

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[9] "Jesus or Christ?" Being the *Hibbert Journal* Supplement for 1909, p. 46.

But as soon as we say this, it is clear that we cannot appeal to the human traits which they ascribe to Jesus as evidence of the existence of an "earlier" Christology than theirs, which looked upon Jesus as merely human. These traits are congruous parts of their own Christology. They are not fragments of an earlier view of Christ's person, persisting as "survivals" in a later view; they are the other half of a consistent christological conception. They supply, therefore, no evidence that there ever existed an earlier Christology than that in which they occupy a necessary place. We may reject, if we please, the Christology of the evangelists, and, rejecting it, insist that Christ was not a divine-human, but simply a human being. But we can get no support for this private, and possibly pious, opinion of our own, from the writings of the evangelists. The human traits, which they all ascribe to Jesus, do not in the least suggest that they, in the bottom of their hearts, or others before them, believed in a merely human Jesus. They only make it manifest that they, and those from whom they derive, believed in a Jesus who was human. The attempt to distort the evidence that they believed in a Jesus who was human, as well as divine, into evidence that they had inherited belief in a merely human Jesus, and unconsciously lapsed into the language of their older and simpler faith, even when endeavoring to commend quite another conception, does violence to every line of their writings; it is not acute historical exposition, but the crassest kind of dogmatic imposition. Because from the critic's own point of view the doctrine of the "Two Natures" involves a psychological impossibility, when he finds the evangelists presenting in their narratives a Jesus who is both divine and human, he proclaims that there are clumsily mixed here two mutually inconsistent Christologies chronologically related to one another as earlier and later; and because from his own point of view a purely divine Jesus were as impossible as a divine-human one, he pronounces that one of these two warring Christologies which makes Jesus a mere man, the earlier, "historical" view, and that one which makes Him divine, a later, "mythical" view. For neither the one nor the other of these pronouncements, however, has he other ground than his own *a priori* prejudice. The divine and the human Jesus of the evangelists do not stand related to one another chronologically, as an earlier and a later view, but vitally, as the two sides of one complex personality; and had there been reason to interpret them as chronologically related there is no reason derivable from the evangelists themselves — or, we may add, from the history of thought in the first years of the Christian proclamation — why the human view of Christ's person should be supposed to be the earlier of the two. From all that appears in these narratives, and from whatever other records we possess, Jesus was, on the contrary, from the beginning understood by His followers to be very God, sojourning on earth. In a word, not only is the doctrine of the "Two Natures" the synthesis of the entire body of christological data embodied in the pages of the New Testament; and not only is it the teaching of all the writers of the New Testament severally; but the New Testament provides no material whatever for inferring that a different view was ever held by the Christian community. The entire Christian tradition, from the beginning, whatever that may be worth, is a tradition of a two-natured Jesus, that is to say, of an incarnated God. Of a one-natured Jesus, Christian tradition knows nothing, and supplies no materials from which He may be inferred.

This determination of the state of the case includes in it, it will be observed, Jesus' own self-testimony. We know nothing of Jesus' self-consciousness, or self-testimony, save as it has been transmitted to us by His followers. The Jesus whom the evangelists have given us testifies to the possession of a self-consciousness which matches perfectly the conception of Jesus which the evangelists are set upon conveying; indeed, the evangelists' conception of Jesus is embodied largely in terms of Jesus' self-testimony. Behind this we can get only by the method of criticism whose inconsequence we have been endeavoring to expose. That "historical Jesus," whom Johannes Weiss (in act of bearing his witness as a historian to the historical validity of the higher Christology) describes as, "so far as we can discern him, seeing his task in drawing his followers into the direct experience of sonship with God, without demanding any place for himself in their piety,"[10] has never existed anywhere except in the imaginations of Weiss and his "liberal" fellow-craftsmen. The evangelists know nothing of Him nor does He lurk anywhere in the background of their narratives. The only Jesus of which they have knowledge — or whose figure is traceable in any of their sources — is a Jesus who ranked Himself above all creatures (Mk. xiii. 32, one of Schmiedel's "pillar-passages," of which J. H. Moulton speaks as "that saying of uniquely acknowledged authenticity");[11] who represented Himself as living continuously in an intercourse with God which cannot be spoken of otherwise than as perfect reciprocity (Mt. xi. 25; Lk. x. 22 — a passage which has its assured place in the "discourses-source"); and who habitually spoke of Himself as the "Son of Man" (as witnessed in both the "narrative-source" and the "discourses-source" — of course, with all the implications of heavenly origin, ineffable exaltation, and judgeship of the world — divine traits all — which accompany that designation). It is pure illusion, therefore, for Karl Thieme to think of himself as faithful to the self-consciousness of Jesus, or as casting off only an "apostolical theologoumenon (*Glaubensgedanke*)" — which he considers no fault — when he attaches himself to a merely human Jesus and pronounces all that is more than this "mythological."[12] This merely human "historical Jesus" is a pure invention of the wish that is father to the thought, and would have been, not merely to Paul, as Martin Brückner justly reminds us,[13] but to all the New Testament writers as well, and to Jesus himself, as depicted by them and as discernible in any sense behind their portraiture — just "nonsense."

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[10] "Paulus und Jesus" (1909), p. 5.

We cannot withhold a certain sympathy, nevertheless, from men who, caught in the toils of modern naturalism, and unable themselves to admit the intrusion of the supernatural into this world of "causative nexus," are determined to keep the merely human Jesus, whom alone they can allow to have existed, free from at least the grosser illusions concerning His person with which the thought of His followers has been (in their view) deformed. There surely is manifested in this determination — utterly unhistorical as it is, in both spirit and

[11] *Free Church Year-Book and Who's Who* for 1911, cited in *The Expository Times*, May, 1911, p. 339.

[12] *Z.Th.K.*, xviii. (1908) pp. 431, 442.

[13] "Die Entstehung der paulinischen Christologie" (1903), p. 12: "For the Christ, too, is for Paul, a redemptive-*historical* personality. Of course, not in the modern sense. The historical Christ in, say, the sense of the Ritchlian school, would have been for Paul, nonsense. The Pauline Christology had rather to do with the experiences of a heavenly being which have, and should have, an extraordinary significance for humanity."

effect — a strong underlying wish to honor Jesus; to preserve to Him at least his sanity — for that is what it comes to in the essence of the matter. A merely human Jesus, who nevertheless believed Himself to be God, were a portentous figure on which to focus the admiring gaze of the Christian generations. We may well believe that a saving instinct underlies all the more extreme historical skepticism in the modern attempts to construe the figure of Jesus, as it is somewhat grotesquely phrased, "historically." The violence done to historical verity, for example, in denying that Jesus thought and proclaimed Himself the Messiah, receives a kind of — shall we say psychological, or shall we say sentimental? — if not justification, yet at least condonation, when we reflect what it would mean for Jesus, if, not being really the Messiah (and from this naturalistic point of view the whole body of messianic hopes were but a frenzied dream), He nevertheless fancied himself the Messiah and assumed the rôle of Messiah. There may even be pleaded a sort of historical condonation for it; it certainly were inconceivable that such a man as Jesus is historically authenticated as being — His whole life informed, for example, with a gracious humility before God — could have been the victim of such a megalomania.[14]

It is into a perfect labyrinth of inconsistencies and contradictions, in fact, that the assumption that Jesus was a mere man betrays us; and from them there is no issue except by the correction of the primal postulate. The old antithesis *aut Deus, aut non bonus* need, indeed, no longer be pressed; none in these modern days (since Renan) is so lost to historical verisimilitude as to think of charging Jesus with coarse charlatanry (cf. Mt. xxvii. 63). But His integrity is saved only at the cost of His intelligence. If none accuse Him of charlatanry, there are many who are ready to ascribe to Him the highest degree of fanaticism, and a whole literature has grown up in recent years around the matter. There is, indeed, no escape from crediting to Him some degree of "enthusiasm," if He is to be considered a mere man. And this, let us understand it clearly, is to ascribe to Him also, when the character of this "enthusiasm" is understood, some degree of what we are accustomed, very illuminatingly, to call "derangement." It is easy, of course, to cry out, as Hans Windisch, for example, does cry out, against the antithesis "Either Jesus Christ was mentally diseased, or He was God-man," as "frightful and soul-imperiling."[15] It is that; but it offers us, nevertheless, the sole possible alternatives. Shall we not recognize it as a delusion which argues mental unsoundness when a mere man proclaims himself God? Even D. F. Strauss taught us this much two generations ago: "If he were a mere man" says he,[16] "and, nevertheless, cherished that expectation" — the expectation, to wit, of quickly coming on the clouds of heaven to inaugurate the messianic kingdom — "we cannot help either ourselves or him. He was, according to our conceptions, a fanatic (*Schwärmer*)." It is possible, no doubt, sturdily to deny that Jesus could have harbored these high thoughts of Himself, or cherished these great expectations. But this is flatly in the face of the whole historical evidence. It is undeniable that the only Jesus known to history was both recognized by His followers and Himself claimed to be something much more than man, and to have before Him a career accordant with His divine being. Nor can this lowered view of Jesus be carried through: neither Harnack, nor Bousset, nor Hausrath, nor Otto has been able, with the best will in the world, to present to us a Jesus free from supernatural elements of self-consciousness.[17] So that it is a true judgment, which Hermann Werner passes upon their efforts to depict a merely human

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[14] This point is admirably elaborated by M. Lepin, "Jésus Messie et Fils de Dieu d'après les Évangiles Synoptiques"³ (1907), p. 163.

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[15] *Theologische Rundschau,* May, 1911, p. 221. He has in view especially Ph. Kneib, "Moderne Leben-Jesu-Forschung unter dem Einflusse der Psychiatrie" (1908), and H. Werner, "Die psychische Gesundheit Jesu" (1908), both of whom press the antithesis.

[16] "Der alte und der neue Glaube," p. 80.

[17] These particular names are adduced only because they happen to be those singled out by H. Werner for examination in a striking article entitled "Der historische Jesus der liberalen Theologie — ein Geisteskranker," published in the *N.K.Z.* (May, 1911), xxii. pp. 347–390. He shows in detail that the Jesus of each of these authors presents symptoms of paranoia.

Werner

Jesus: "The historical Jesus of the liberal theology is and abides a mentally diseased man — as Lepsius strikingly said, 'a tragedy of fanaticism' (*Schwärmerei*)."[18] If these supernatural claims were "mythical," then either there was no real Jesus, and His very personality vanishes into the myth into which all that is historical concerning Him is sublimated, or the real Jesus was the subject of acute megalomania in His estimate of Himself.

If Jesus is purely human, & history attests no purely human Jesus, then Jesus didn't exist

And here we discover the significance in the history of thought of the new radicalism which has, in our day, actually raised the question — a question which has become a "burning" one in Germany, the home of the "merely human Jesus" — whether "Jesus ever lived." Men like Albert Kalthoff and Karl Kautsky, Wilhelm von Schnehen and Arthur Drews, emphasize the fact that the only Jesus known to history was a divine being become man for human redemption — not a deified man, but an incarnate God. If this Jesus is a mythological figure — why, there is no "historical Jesus" left. The zeal for vindicating the actual existence of a "historical Jesus," which has developed in the circles of German "liberalism" during the past two years, is most commendable. The task is easy, and the success with which it has been accomplished is correspondingly great. But the real significance, whether of the attack or the defense, seems to be only slowly becoming recognized, or at least to have been acknowledged by those involved most deeply in the conflict. It lies, however, very much on the surface. Arthur Drews is simply the *reductio ad absurdum* of David Friedrich Strauss. And the vindication of the actuality of a "historical Jesus," against the assault of which Drews has become the central figure, is the definitive refutation of the entire "mythical theory," which, inaugurated by Strauss, has been the common foundation on which the whole "liberal" school has built for two generations. There is, of course, nothing more certain than that "Jesus lived." But there is another thing which is equally certain with it; and that is expressed with irrefutable clearness and force by Arthur Drews when he declares that "the Jesus of the oldest Christian communities is not, as is commonly thought" — that is to say, in the circles of "liberalism" — "a deified man, but a humanized God." It is impossible to sublimate into myth the whole Jesus of the New Testament testimony, the Jesus of the evangelists, the Jesus of all the evangelical sources which can be even in part isolated and examined, the Jesus, in a word, of the entire historical witness, and retain any Jesus at all. The "mythical Jesus" is not the invention of Drews, but of Strauss, and it is common ground with Drews and all his "liberal" opponents. It is a mere matter of detail whether we say with Weinel that the historical Jesus was a mere man, but a man whom "we know right well — as well as if we could see him still before us today, and were able to hear his voice"; or with Pfleiderer, that He was certainly a mere man, but is so bound up with the legends that have grown up about Him that we can never know anything about His real personality; or with Drews, that there is no reason for supposing that He ever existed at all: a mere matter of detail, indifferent to history, which knows nothing of any Jesus but the divine Jesus. The advent of the new radicalism into the field of discussion cannot fail, however, greatly to clear the air; the merely human Jesus is really eliminated by it from the catalogue of possible hypotheses, and the issue is drawn sharply and singly: Is the divine-human Jesus, who alone is historically witnessed a reality, or a myth? *Tertium non datur.*

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[18] H. Werner, as above, pp. 383–389.

Thus we are brought to the final issue. The two-natured Christ is the synthesis of the whole mass of biblical data concerning Christ. The doctrine of the Two Natures underlies all the New Testament writings severally, and it is commended to us by the combined authority of all those primitive followers of Christ who have left written records of their faith. It is the only doctrine of Christ which can be discerned lying back of our formal records in pre-written tradition; it is the aboriginal faith of the Christian community. It is the only alternative to a non-existent Christ; we must choose between a two-natured Christ and a simply mythical Christ. By as much as "Jesus lived," by so much is it certain that the Jesus who lived is the person who alone is witnessed to us as having lived — the Jesus who, being Himself of heavenly origin and superior to the very angels, had come to earth on a mission of mercy, to seek and save those who are lost, and who, after He had given His life a ransom for many, was to come again on the clouds of heaven to judge the world. No other Jesus than this ever lived. No doubt He lived as man, His life adorned with all the gracious characteristics of a man of God. But He cannot be stripped of His divine claims. We have already had occasion to advert to the gross contradiction which is involved in supposing that such a man as He was could have preserved that fine flavor of humility toward God which characterized His whole life-manifestation and yet have falsely imagined Himself that exalted being in whose fancied personality He lived out His life on earth. The trait which made it possible for Him to put Himself forward as the Fellow of God would have made the humility of heart and demeanor which informed all His relations with God impossible. Our modern humanitarians, of course, gloze the psychological contradiction; but they cannot withhold recognition of the contrast of traits which must be accredited to any Jesus who can really be believed — even on their postulates — to have ever existed.[19] Standing before this puzzle of his life-manifestation, Adolf Harnack writes: [20]

> "Only one who has had a kindred experience could go to the bottom here. A prophet might perhaps attempt to lift the veil; such as we must be content to assure ourselves that the Jesus who taught self-knowledge and humility, yet gave to himself, and to himself alone, the name of the Son of God."

And again: [21]

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[19] "What contradictions must Jesus have united in himself on the basis of the liberal life-picture of him," exclaims H. Werner (*Neue kirchliche Zeitschrift*, May, 1911, p. 389). "He was at the same time humble and proud, acute-minded and weak-minded, clear-sighted and blind, sober-minded and fanatical, with profound knowledge of men and no self-knowledge, clear in his insight of the present, and full of fantastic dreams of the future. His life was, as Lepsius strikingly said, 'a tragedy of fanaticism.'"

[20] "Das Wesen des Christentums" (56–60 Tausend, 1908), p. 82.

[21] "Das Christentum und die Geschichte," [5] p. 10 (E. T. "Christianity and History," 1896, p. 37).

> "But it is of one alone that we know that he united the deepest humility and purity of will with the claim that he was more than all the prophets who were before him, even the Son of God. Of him alone, we know that those who ate and drank with him glorified him, not only as the Teacher, Prophet, and King, but also as the Prince of Life, as the Redeemer, Judge of the world, as the living power of their existence — 'It is not I that live, but Christ in me' — and that presently a band of the Jew and gentile, the wise and foolish, acknowledged that they had received from the abundance of this one man, grace for grace. This fact which is open to the light of day is unique in history; and it requires that the actual personality behind it should be honored as unique."

In similar vein Paul Wernle, having pointed out that the two elements found in the Gospels are also found in Jesus' own consciousness, exclaims:[22]

> "What is astonishing in Jesus is the co-existence of the superhuman self-consciousness with the most profound humility before God. It is the same man that cries, 'All things have been delivered unto me of my Father, and no one knoweth the Father save the Son,' and who replies to the rich young ruler, 'Why callest thou me good, there is none good save God.' Without the former, a man like us; without the latter, a fanatic."

By his last words Wernle apparently fancies that all is said which needs to be said in order to explain the anomaly, when it is said that Jesus takes up "the rôle of Mediator": we shall no longer be surprised that he claims something on both parts. But the astounding features of the case cannot be so lightly disposed of. When the two elements of it are given each its full validity; when the completeness of Jesus' humility before God is realized on the one side, and the height of His claim reaching to the supreme deity itself, on the other, it is safe to say that such a combination of mental states within the limits of a single nature will be acknowledged to be inconceivable. It is inconceivable that the same soul could have produced two such contradictory states of mind contemporaneously. Could have *produced* them, we say. Should we not add the question whether a single soul could even have harbored such contradictory states? Such contradictory states of consciousness could no more dwell together in one unitary conscious spirit than issue from it as its creation. The self-consciousness of Jesus is, in other words, distinctly duplex, and necessarily implies dual centers of self-consciousness. Only in such a conception of the person can the mind rest. If Jesus was both the Son of God, in all the majesty of true deity, and a true child of man, in creaturely humility — if, that is, He was both God and man, in two distinct natures united, however inseparably and eternally, yet without conversion or confusion in one person — we have in His person, no doubt, an inexhaustible mystery, the mystery surpassing all mysteries, of combined divine love and human devotion. If He was not both God and man in two distinct natures combined in one person, the mystery of His personality passes over into a mere mass of crass contradictions which cannot all be believed; which, therefore, invite arbitrary denial on the one side or the other; and which will inevitably lead to each man creating for himself an artificial Jesus, reduced in the traits allowed to Him to more credible consistency — if indeed, it does not directly tempt to His entire sublimation into a highly composite ideal.

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[22] "Die Anfänge unserer Religion"² (1904), p. 28.

It can scarcely be necessary to add that escape from these psychological contradictions, incident to the attempt to construct a one-natured Christ, cannot be had by fleeing to "the discoveries of the new psychology." It is vain to point, for example, to the phenomena of what is commonly spoken of as "multiple personality" as offering a parallel to the duplex consciousness manifested by our Lord. We need not insist on the pathological character of these phenomena, and their distressing accompaniments, marking as they do the disintegration of the normal consciousness; or on the lack of affinity of the special form of mental disease of which they are symptomatic with the paranoia from which Jesus must have suffered, on the hypothesis that He was no more than a man. It is doubtless enough to ask what kind of a super-divine nature this is that is attributed to Him under the guise of a human nature, which is capable of splitting up in its disintegration into supreme Godhood and perfect manhood as its aliquot, perhaps even as aliquant, parts. If the mere fragments of His personality stand forth as God in His essential majesty and man in the height of man's possibilities, what must He be in the unitary integration of His normal personality? Surely no remotest analogy to such a dualism of consciousness can be discovered in the pitiable spectacle of Dr. Morton Prince's "Miss Beaucamp" and her "Sally."[23] If we have here a merely human personality, in dual dissociation, the miraculous multiplication of the loaves and fishes is eclipsed; the fragments are in immeasurable overplus of the supply.

It may seem more hopeful, therefore, to call in "the new psychology" as an aid to the explanation of the mystery of our Lord's person, when the divine nature is not denied. Even if, however, the original nature be conceived as divine, and the man Jesus be interpreted as a dissociated section of the divine consciousness, which maintains itself in its full divinity by its side, what have we given us but a new Docetism, complicated with a meaningless display of contradictory attributes? A special form is sometimes given[24] to this mode of conceiving the matter, however, which, perhaps, should not pass without particular notice. Appeal is made to the curious cases of "alternating personality," occasionally occurring, in which a man suddenly loses all consciousness of his identity and becomes for a time, longer or shorter, practically a different person. Thus, for example, Ansel Bourne, preacher, of Greene, R. I., became suddenly A. J. Brown, confectioner, of Norristown, Pennsylvania, and remained just A. J. Brown for some months with no consciousness whatever of Ansel Bourne, until just as suddenly he became Ansel Bourne again with no consciousness whatever of A. J. Brown.[25] In the light of such instances, we are asked, what psychological obstacle forbids our supposing that the Divine Being who created the universe and has existed from eternity as the Son of God became for a season a man with all the limitations of a man? Why may we not, with psychological justification, look upon Jesus Christ as the infinite God "functioning through a special consciousness with limited power and knowledge"? Why not explain the man Jesus, in other words, just as the "alternative personality" of the Second Person of the Trinity? Such purely speculative questions may possess attractions for some classes of minds; but they certainly have no concernment with the Christ of history. The problem which the Christ of history presents is not summed up merely in the essential identity of the man Jesus with the God of heaven, but includes the co-existence in that one person, whom we know as Christ Jesus, of a double consciousness, divine and human. The solution which is offered leaves the actual problem wholly to one side. In proposing a merely human Jesus, with a divine background indeed, of which, however, He is entirely unconscious, it constructs a purely artificial Jesus of whom history knows nothing: the fundamental fact about the historical Jesus in His unocculted divine consciousness.[26]

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[23] Morton Prince, "The Dissociation of a Personality. A Biographical Study in Abnormal Psychology" (1906).

[24] As, for example, very recently by D. A. Murray, "Christian Faith and the New Psychology" (1911).

[25] The case is described by William James in his "Principles of Psychology" (ed. 1908), i. pp. 391–393.

For the same reason the suggestion which has been made[27] that the phenomenal Jesus may be allowed to be strictly human, and the divine Jesus be sought in what it is now fashionable to call His "subliminal self," is altogether beside the mark. The "subliminal self" is only another name for the subconscious self; and the relegation of the divine in Jesus to the realm of the unconscious definitely breaks with the entire historical testimony. Even if the hypothesis really allowed for a two-natured Christ — which in the form, at least, in which it is put forward, it does not, but presents us with only a man-Christ, differing from His fellow-men only in degree and not at all in kind — it would stand wholly out of relation with the only Christ that ever existed. For the Christ of history was not unconscious, but continually conscious, of His deity, and of all that belongs to His deity. He knew Himself to be the Son of God in a unique sense — as such, superior to the very angels and gazing unbrokenly into the depths of the Divine Being, knowing the Father even as He was known of the Father. He felt within Him the power to make the stones that lay in His pathway bread for His strengthening, and the power (since He had come to save the lost) rather to bruise his feet upon them that He might give His life a ransom for many and afterward return on the clouds of heaven to judge the world. Of this Jesus, the only real Jesus, it cannot be said that His consciousness was "entirely human"; and a Jesus of whom this can be said has nothing in common with the only historical Jesus, in whom His divine consciousness was as constant and vivid as His human.

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[26] Therefore even the cautious and strictly limited appeal to the phenomena of multiplex personality by J. Oswald Dykes (*The Expository Times*, January, 1906, xvii. p. 156) is without effect. He says: "I am far from implying that the analogy between the phenomena of the subliminal life, and the coexistence in our Lord of divine and human consciousness is either close or satisfying. The case of incarnate Deity is and must be unique and incomparable. What they do suggest is that within the mysterious depths of a single personality, there may coexist parallel states of spirit life, one only of which emerges in ordinary human consciousness. They may serve to repel the superficial objection that such a dualism is impossible. Within Christ's complex and wonderful constitution, room might be found for a life-activity, verily His own, yet of which He had on earth no human consciousness, or at most, it may be, an intermittent and imperfect knowledge; and, if it were so, the psychology of the human personality has nothing to say against it." The case supposed is not that of the historical Christ.

[27] By W. Sanday, "Christologies Ancient and Modern" (1910); further

The doctrines of the Two Natures supplies, in a word, the only possible solution of the enigmas of the life-manifestation of the historical Jesus. It presents itself to us, not as the creator, but as the solvent of difficulties — in this, performing the same service to thought which is performed by all the Christian doctrines.[28] If we look upon it merely as a hypothesis, it com-

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explained in a more recent pamphlet, called "Personality in Christ and in Ourselves" (1911), in which the incarnation is expressly reduced to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. Cf. also H. R. Mackintosh, *The Expository Times*, xxi. (August and September, 1910) pp. 486, 553.

[28] Cf. B. F. Westcott, "The Gospel of Life" (1892).

mands our attention by the multiplicity of phenomena which it reduces to order and unifies, and on this lower ground, too, commends itself to our acceptance. But it does not come to us merely as a hypothesis. It is the assertion concerning their Lord of all the primary witnesses of the Christian faith. It is, indeed, the self-testimony of our Lord Himself, disclosing to us the mystery of His being. It is, to put it briefly, the simple statement of " the fact of Jesus," as that fact is revealed to us in His whole manifestation. We may reject it if we will, but in rejecting it we reject the only real Jesus in favor of another Jesus — who is not another, but is the creature of pure fantasy. The alternatives which we are really face to face with are, Either the two-natured Christ of history, or — a strong delusion.

VII

CHRISTLESS CHRISTIANITY

CHRISTLESS CHRISTIANITY[1]

"The Christ Myth" by Arthur Drews was published early in 1909,[2] and before the year was out its author was being requisitioned by dissidents from Christianity of the most incongruous types as a promising instrument for the general anti-Christian propaganda. Few more remarkable spectacles have ever been witnessed than the exploitation throughout Germany in the opening months of 1910 of this hyper-idealistic metaphysician, disciple of von Hartmann and convinced adherent of the "Philosophy of the Unconscious," by an Alliance the declared basis of whose organization is a determinate materialism. As, under the auspices of the *Monistenbund,* he made his progress from city to city, lecturing and debating, he drew a tidal-wave of sensation along with him. A violent literary war was inaugurated. It seemed as if all theological Germany were aroused.

In one quarter there was an ominous silence. The "conservative" theologians looked on at the whole performance with bitter contempt. When twitted[3] with leaving to the "liberals" the whole task of defending the historicity of Jesus against Drews, they replied with much justice that it was none of their fight. The liberals had for two generations been proclaiming the only Jesus that ever existed a myth: why should it cause surprise if some at length were taking the proclamation seriously and drawing the inference — if such a simple recasting of the identical proposition can be called an inference — that therefore no Jesus ever existed? If the Christianity which flowed out from Palestine and overspread the world was not the creation of Jesus, but the spontaneous precipitation of old-world myths from a solution just now, as it happened, evaporated past the saturation point, why postulate behind it a shadowy figure, standing in no causal relation to it, without any effective historical connection with it, for whose existence there is therefore neither historical nor logical need? We may not think the language elegant, but we can scarcely pronounce the jibe unprovoked, when Herr Superintendent Doctor Matthes of Kolberg bursts forth in Hengstenberg's old *Evangelical Church-Journal:*[4] "That the wasted, colorless phantom which alone the Liberal theology leaves over of Jesus could not have transformed a world,— that is clear to all the world except the Liberal theologians themselves, who are still always hoping to see their homunculus come forth from the Gilgameshmishmashmush-brine which alone is left in the pantry of the comparative-religionists and which Arthur Drews has served out afresh to the Berliners." That the liberal theology has travailed and brought forth a monstrous birth is not surprising; nor is it surprising that the fruit of its womb should turn and rend it. Let them fight it out; that is their concern; and if the issue is, as seems likely, the end of both, the world will be well rid of them. Why should sane people take part in such a "theological mill" in which "as-yet Christians" and "no-longer Christians" struggle together in the arena with nothing at stake, — for certainly the difference between the reduced Jesus of the one and the no Jesus of the other is not worth contending about? To deny the existence of Jesus is, of course, as Ernst Troeltsch puts it, "silly";[5] to be asked to defend the actual existence of Jesus is, as Adolf Harnack phrases it, "humiliating."[6] But the artillery which the liberal theologians have hurriedly trained upon the denial shows how little they can really let it go at that. It is only the conservative, secure in the possession of the real Jesus, who can look serenely upon this shameful folly and with undisturbed detachment watch the wretched comedy play itself out.

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[1] From *The Harvard Theological Review,* v. 1912, pp. 423–473.

[2] Arthur Drews, "Die Christusmythe," Jena, 1909, and many subsequent editions. English translation: "The Christ Myth," by Arthur Drews, Ph.D., Professor of Philosophy in the Techn. Hochschule, Karlsruhe. Translated from the third edition (revised and enlarged) by C. Delisle Burns, M.A. London [1910].

[3] As by the *Christliche Freiheit,* February 13, 1910.

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[4] *Die evangelische Kirchenzeitung,* March 6, 1910.

[5] "Die törichte Frage" ("Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben," 1911, p. 2).

[6] "Beschämend" (*Neue Freie Presse,* May 15, 1910, reprinted in "Aus Wissenschaft und Leben," 1911, ii. p. 167).

Only the conservative, — and, we may add, the extreme radical. For there is a radicalism, still calling itself Christian, so thoroughgoing as to fall as much below concernment with the question whether Jesus ever lived as conservatism rises above it. The conservative looks with unconcern upon all the pother stirred up by the debate on the historicity of Jesus, because he clearly perceives that it is all (if we may combine Harnack's and Troeltsch's phraseology) scandalous nonsense, unworthy of the notice of anyone with an atom of historical understanding. The radical looks upon it with unconcern because in his self-centered life Jesus has no essential place and no necessary part to play: the question whether Jesus ever lived is to him a merely academic one. An interesting episode in Drews' lecture tour through the Germanic cities brings this point of view before us with strong emphasis. A discussion was contemplated at Bremen also, and the *Monistenbund* there extended an invitation to the local *Protestantenverein* to take part in it. This invitation was decisively declined, and the *Protestantenverein* took a good deal of pains to make it perfectly plain why it was declined. The *Protestantenverein* was not quite clear in its own mind that the whole business was not merely an advertising scheme for the benefit of the *Monistenbund;* though, to be sure, it could not see what Monists as Monists have to do with the question whether Jesus ever lived, more than "whether Socrates ever lived, or Bacon wrote Shakespeare's plays." The *Protestantenverein,* moreover, for itself felt entirely assured on good historical grounds of the historicity of Jesus, and had no interest in threshing out old straw. But it was on neither of these grounds that it declined to take part in the debate, but precisely because it was a matter of no importance to it whether Jesus ever lived or not. "All the theologians of the Bremen *Protestanten-*

verein," they formally explain, "are agreed that the question whether Jesus lived is, as such, not a religious but a historico-scientific question. It would be sad for Christianity as a religion if its right of existence hung on the question whether anybody whatever ever lived, or anything whatever ever occurred, even though it be the greatest personalities and the most important events which are in question. Every true religion lives not because of 'accidental truths of history,' but because of 'eternal truths of reason.' It lives not because of its past, more or less verifiable and always subject to the critical scrutiny of historical science; but because of the vital forces which it every day disengages afresh into the soul from the depths of the unconditioned." All the great religious forces of Christianity — trust in the Living God, elevated moral self-respect, sincere love of men — are quite independent today of all question of the historicity of Jesus, and therefore this question can without fear be left in the hands in which it belongs, — in the hands of untrammelled historical criticism. "Whether Jesus existed or not, is for our religious and Christian life, in the last analysis, a matter of indifference, if only this life be really religious and Christian, and preserve its vital power in our souls and in our conduct." [7]

There is asserted here something more than that religion is independent of Jesus. That was being vigorously asserted by the adherents of the *Monistenbund;* and as for Drews, his "Christ Myth" — like the "Christianity of the New Testament" of his master, von Hartmann, before it — was written, he tells us, precisely in the interests of religion, and seeks to sweep Jesus out of the way that men may be truly religious. With the extremities of this view the members of the Bremen *Protestantenverein* express no sympathy: they are of the number of those who profess and call themselves Christians. What they assert, therefore, is not that religion merely, but distinctively that Christianity is independent of Jesus. They do not declare, indeed, that Christianity, as it has actually existed in the world, has had, in point of fact, nothing to do with Jesus; or that Christians of today — they themselves as Christians — have had or have no relations with Jesus. They are convinced on sound historical grounds of the historicity of Jesus; they recognize that he has played a part in setting the movement called Christianity going; they draw, no doubt, inspiration from his memory. What they cannot allow is that he is essential to Christianity. They are conscious of standing in some such relation to him as that in which an idealistic philosopher stands, say, to a Plato. In point of fact such a philosopher reverences Plato, and derives from him inspiration and impulse, perhaps even instruction. But had there been no Plato, he would be able to do very well without a Plato. So Christians may in point of fact owe not a little to Jesus, and they may be very willing to acknowledge their indebtedness. But Christianity cannot be dependent on Jesus. Though there had been no Jesus, Christianity would be; and were his figure eradicated from history — or even from the mind of man — tomorrow, Christianity would suffer no loss. The sources of its life, the springs of its vitality, lie in itself: it may owe much to a great personality, teaching it, embodying it; it cannot owe to him its being.

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[7] See the whole document in the *Christliche Welt,* April 28, 1910, coll. 402 ff.

The *Protestantenverein* of the good city of Bremen is, of course, not the inventor of this Christless Christianity. It is as old as Christianity itself; and has come to explicit assertion whenever and wherever men have thought of Christianity rather as universal human religion in more or less purity of expression — perhaps in the purest expression yet given to it, or even in its purest possible expression — than as a specific positive religion instituted among men in particular historical circumstances.[8] The classical period of this point of view is, of course, the Enlightenment; and its classical expounder in that period, Gotthold Ephraim Lessing; and the classical treatise in which Lessing propounds it, the tract written in response to Johann Daniel Schumann under the title, " Concerning the Proof of Spirit and Power" (1777); in which occurs accordingly its classical crystallization in a crisp proposition, the famous declaration (very naturally quoted by the theologians of the Bremen *Protestantenverein*) that "accidental truths of history can never be the proof of necessary truths of reason."

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[8] Hermann Reuter, " Geschichte der religiösen Aufklärung im Mittelalter," 1875, 1877, gives mediaeval instances.

In Lessing's conception, as in that of some before him and of many after him,[9] Christianity is in its essence simply what we have learned to know as altruism. He sums it up in what he calls "the Testament of John,"—"Little children, love one another"; and he refuses to believe that "dogmas," whatever may be said of their probability, or even of their truth, can enter into its essence. The proximate purpose of the tract, "Concerning the Proof of Spirit and Power,"[10] is to show that the "dogmas" of the "Christian religion" cannot be put forward as essential truths, and so far as they are not intrinsically self-evidencing rest on evidence which is at best but probable. But the argument itself takes rather the form of an assault on the trustworthiness of historical testimony in general. Lessing does not deny, in this tract, that truths might conceivably be commended by authority. If a man actually witnessed miracles or fulfilments of prophecy, he might no doubt be brought to subject his understanding to that of him in whom the prophecies were visibly fulfilled and by whom the miracles were wrought. But this is not our case. We have no miracles or fulfilments to rest on; we have only accounts of miracles and fulfilments. And "accounts of the fulfilment of prophecies are not fulfilments of prophecies; accounts of miracles are not miracles." "Prophecies fulfilled before my eyes, miracles worked before my eyes," he explains, "work immediately. Accounts of fulfilments of prophecies and of miracles have to work through a medium which deprives them of all force." "How," he exclaims, "can it be asked of me to believe with the same energy, on infinitely less inducement, the very same incomprehensible truths which people from sixteen to eighteen hundred years ago believed on the strongest possible inducement?" "Or," he demands, with a show of outrage, "is everything that I read in trustworthy history, without exception, just as certain for me as what I myself experience?"

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[9] Perhaps the most thoroughgoing expression of it is given by Ludwig Feuerbach, "The Essence of Christianity," E. T.^{2} 1881, p. 209: "He therefore who loves man for the sake of man, who rises to the love of the species, to universal love, adequate to the nature of the species, he is a Christian, is Christ himself." Auguste Sabatier, however, in his ultimate statement, scarcely falls short of this. Christianity, he tells us, is the religion "of universal redemption by love," that is everybody's love for everybody. ("The Doctrine of the Atonement and its Historical Evolution," E. T. 1904, p. 134.)

[10] "Ueber den Beweis des Geistes und der Kraft," in Lachmann's edition of Lessing's "sämtliche Schriften," xiii. pp. 1–8.

The argumentative force of the representation resides, of course, largely in its exaggerations,—"deprived of *all* force," "without exception." But Lessing skilfully proceeds to cover these exaggerations up by assuming at once an air of the sweetest reasonableness. "I do not know," he remarks, "that anyone ever maintained just that; what is maintained is only that the accounts which we have of these prophecies and miracles are just as trustworthy as any historical truths can be. And then it is added that no doubt historical truths cannot be demonstrated,—yet, nevertheless, we must believe them just as firmly as demonstrated truths." Surely, however, exclaims Lessing, "if no historical truth can be demonstrated, then nothing can be demonstrated *by means* of historical truths, that is, accidental truths of history can never be the proof of necessary truths of reason." "I do not deny at all," he protests, "that prophecies were fulfilled in Christ; I do not deny at all that Christ wrought miracles: but I do deny that these miracles, since their truth has altogether ceased to be evinced by miracles which are still accessible today, since there exist nothing but accounts of miracles (no matter how undenied, how undeniable, they may be supposed to be), can or ought to bind me to the least faith in any other teachings of Christ."

The whole procedure involves at any rate a μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος. To know that Christ raised a man from the dead,—how does that prove that God has a Son? Suppose I could prove that Christ rose from the dead? How does that prove that He is God's Son? "In what connection does my inability to advance anything decisive against the testimony to that fact stand with my duty to believe something which outrages my reason?" You tell me that the very Christ who rose from the dead declared that He was the Son of God, of the same nature with God. Of that declaration, too, we have nothing but historical evidence. If you say, No, we have inspired evidence, for the Bible is inspired, — of that, too, we have nothing but historical evidence! "This, this, is the nasty wide ditch, across which I cannot get, no matter how often and earnestly I have tried to leap it. If anybody can help me over it, let him do it, I beg him, I implore him. He will do me a great charity." Thus Lessing ends his sinuous argument with a round denial that "historical evidence" can ever place a fact beyond question. It is a case of general historical skepticism. The only evidence which can really establish a truth is the truth's own self-evidence. He breaks off suddenly, therefore, with a recommendation to his readers, divided by disputes over the Gospel of John, to come together on the Testament of John. "It is, no doubt, apocryphal, this Testament: but it is not the less divine for that." Truth is truth wherever we find it. And truth is truth to us for no other reason than that it finds us.[11]

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[11] Otto Kirn, "Glaube und Geschichte," 1900, pp. 9–10, remarks on Lessing's double point of view and the consequent confusion in his argument: "The position of the critic appears upon more exact consideration as little sure. He attacks his adversary at once from two standpoints which are not in harmony. He asserts with the Wolffian Dogmatism that reason can never receive its convictions through history. To this standpoint, however, self-experienced and past facts are alike unimportant and inconclusive, when the question concerns religious or ethical propositions. Then he comes forward in the armor of the historical critic, who is ready to let himself be convinced by facts if only they be certainly established, and authenticated by self-experienced analogies: the training of his critical judgment forbade him, however, to draw far-reaching conclusions from facts which 'act through a medium,' and remain controversial. As a Wolffian he could not openly concede what as historian of certainly authenticated facts he declared himself ready to grant. Lessing's vacillation between dogmatic rationalism and critical empiricism manifests itself in this double attitude towards history: with the one he belongs to the Enlightenment, with the other he is preparing the way for a time which would be able to see in history something better than a source of 'obscure and confused ideas' (cf. Windelband, "A History of Philosophy," § 33, 9)."

It was not to be expected that a point of view so natural to the Age of Reason should continue in the same measure to hold the minds of men in the Age of History. But neither was it to be expected that a point of view so deeply rooted in the popular philosophy of the eighteenth century should fail to project itself into the nineteenth, and color the thought of all who in any large degree draw their mental inheritance from the Enlightenment. We are not surprised to find Kant standing in his judgment of history wholly on the ground of Rationalism, or the lately resurrected Fries following closely in Kant's steps. Nor are we really surprised to observe Fichte still determined by the old point of view, and not even Hegel yet emancipated from it.[12] What does surprise us is that at the end of the days a Rudolf Eucken, true child of the Age of History, and, if one could be permitted to judge only from his profound sense of sin and of the need of divine grace for its overcoming, almost persuaded to be a Christian, can still speak through much the same mask. There is a passage in the first edition of his book on "The Truth-contents of Religion,"[13] which, though historical in form, fairly expresses his own attitude towards the relation of religious truth to historical fact. Historical criticism, he thinks, has very seriously shattered the historical foundations of Christianity; indeed, the very subjection of these foundations to criticism, he argues, disqualifies them for serving as foundations of faith, however this criticism issues. Then he proceeds:

> "But the shaking of the historical foundations of the religious life goes still further: it is not merely that we are compelled to doubt particular items of their contents, it is that history itself no longer seems proper to serve as the foundation of religion. For the thought to which the modern world commits the guidance of life is not disposed to recognize history as a source of eternal truths. Such

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[12] A lucid sketch of the history of opinion on the relations of faith and history is given in pp. 1–27 of Otto Kirn's "Glaube und Geschichte," 1900. See also Karl Dunkmann, "Das religiöse Apriori und die Geschichte," 1910, pp. 11–51, and the admirable general account by C. W. Hodge, in the article, "Fact and Theory" in Hastings's "Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels," i. 1908, pp. 562–567, esp. 564–565.

[13] "Der Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion," 1901, pp. 34–35.

a truth must be capable of immediate realization; it must be verifiable by every one and at all times; that is possible, however, only where it is grounded in the timeless nature of reason, and is continually verifiable anew thence. An occurrence of the past, on the other hand, no matter how deeply it has been imbedded in the historical connection, and no matter how energetic it may still be in its effects, does not on that account at all become a portion of our life: we cannot experience it immediately, we cannot ourselves even test its validity, we cannot transform it into a personal possession. That, however, according to our conviction, is precisely what is required for fundamental truths of religion. Thus reason and history stand over against one another in sharp opposition, and the grounding, as of all spirituality, so also of religion, on history calls out the strongest opposition. 'Accidental truths of history can never become the proof of necessary truths of reason' (Lessing). If life, however, casts off this connection with history, it becomes nonsense and an unendurable burden to bind the health of man's soul to the voluntary acceptance of historical occurrences, or even of occurrences supported by history. 'That historical belief is a duty and belongs to salvation is superstition' (Kant). Can such a dissolution of the old blending of reason and history affect and shake any other religion more deeply than Christianity, which is the most historical of all religions?"

Some modifications have been introduced into this passage in the second edition of "The Truth-contents of Religion,"[14] but these do not alter its general bearing. It is allowed that the Enlightenment "differentiated too sharply reason and history, the individual life and tradition, and overestimated the power of any present moment of consciousness." But the contention that history can provide no foundation for religious convictions is still pronounced true, and the quotations from Lessing and Kant are still approved, and this from Fichte is added: "Let no one assert that it does no harm to cling to such historical beliefs. It is injurious in that subsidiary facts are given equal validity with essential ones, or, indeed, are presented as the essential facts, and consequently the main facts are suppressed and the conscience tormented." With such a

[14] Published in 1905: E. T., "The Truth of Religion," 1911, pp. 33–34.

view of history in its relation to religion, of course Eucken cannot find the roots of his religion, which he would still call Christianity, in Christ. "We can honor him," he tells us, "as a leader, a hero, a martyr; but we cannot directly bind ourselves to him, or root ourselves in him: we cannot unconditionally submit to him. Still less can we make him the centre of a worship. To do so, from our point of view, would be nothing less than an intolerable deification of a human being."[15] Eucken thus quite purely carries on the tradition of a non-historical, which is, of course, also in the nature of the case a Christless Christianity.

There is much in the mental state of our times to add strength to this traditional distrust of history as a basis for religious convictions. Modern thought is not yet emancipated from that ingrained individualism which is impatient of all "external authority," and wishes each soul to be a law to itself. The very preoccupation of the age with history has moreover brought with it its nemesis. A wide-spread impression has grown up that in the crucible of historical criticism all historical magnitudes have melted; that the whole past has become uncertain and conjectural, if not absolutely unknowable; and that nothing solid is left to offer a foundation for faith. Looking upon themselves and all that they have, instinctively, as the product of historical development, men's hold upon even their most precious spiritual possessions has relaxed; everything is in a flux, and all alike, as it is the product of change, so is held to be subject to change. Christianity itself in the universal flow comes to be thought of only as a passing phase of religious thought, as only one among many religions, rising above the rest, if at all, only in degree.

[15] "Können wir noch Christen sein?" 1911, p. 37. Eucken, in this work, asks if we can still be Christians, and answers yes, — but only by remoulding Christianity to fit our new philosophy which will not hear of a divine Redeemer or an expiatory redemption. "We have asked," he says in his closing words (p. 236), "whether we of today can still be Christians. We reply that not only can we be, but we must be. We can be Christians, however, only if Christianity be recognized to be a world-historical movement still in flux, if it be shaken out of its ecclesiastical petrifaction and placed upon a broader basis. In this are found the task of our time and the hope of the future."

Many have even become surfeited with history, and, suffocated by its load of facts, react from what Nietzsche girds at as "the hypertrophy of history"[16] in the interests of "untrammelled thinking." Meanwhile the broadened historical horizon has dwarfed the significance of isolated historical events, which alone, it is said, are accessible to our observation. The imagination, fed on illimitable stretches of space and endless progressions of time, finds difficulty in attaching supreme importance to this or that historical incident, occurring at but a point of this boundless space and occupying but a moment of this measureless time. If men are disheartened by the uncertainties of history and irritated by its oppressive superfluity, they are even more dispirited by its littleness and insignificance as known to us. With what propriety, it is asked, "can a proposition about the happening of a particular incident at a certain time in a little corner of the earth" be represented as "one of the fundamental verities which every man ought to know and believe for his soul's health?"

This last sentence we have taken from an article by Arthur O. Lovejoy, which very fairly represents the manner in which this general point of view may still be advocated at the opening of the twentieth century. He calls his article, significantly, "The Entangling Alliance of Religion and History";[17] and, in the course of it, he advances most of the considerations in aversion to this alliance which we have just rapidly summarized from a statement, already doubtless sufficiently summary, by Ernst Troeltsch.[18]

> "Since [he argues] religion constitutes a man's ultimate and definitive intellectual and moral reaction upon his experience, and since it presupposes the possession of truths valid and significant for all men, religious belief will naturally affirm only [why 'only'?] truths of a universal and cosmic bearing. It will deal exclusively

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[16] "Vom Nutzen und Schaden der Historie für das Leben," in "Unzeitgemässe Betrachtungen," 1874, ii.² p. 210.

[17] *Hibbert Journal*, January, 1907, pp. 258–276: cf. esp. p. 269.

[18] Article, "Glaube und Geschichte" in Schiele and Zscharnack," Die Religion, etc.," ii. coll. 1450–1452.

[why 'exclusively'?] with the 'eternal' verities and ignore contingent and temporal matters-of-fact. . . . Its content will consist of propositions equally pertinent to the interests, and equally accessible to the knowledge [is the equality absolute?] of all such beings, at any time, in any place. . . . It will not make the belief in the occurrence or non-occurrence of specific local and temporal events any part of its essence."

The very spirit of Lessing is here, — even to Lessing's characteristic assumptions of definitions and characteristic exaggerations of statement. It is treated as axiomatic on the one hand that the whole truth-content of religion must be self-evident, and on the other that history can afford us only probabilities. The Deists, it is suggested, were in the essence of the matter right, when they contended that historical propositions are unfitted to enter into the truth-content of religion because, on the one hand, they cannot be universally known, and, on the other, they "do not strictly constitute knowledge at all." No beliefs about happenings, assuredly, can stand the test of the *Quod semper, ubique, et ab omnibus* — if we take the terms strictly; or can the actual occurrence of events be made more than probable, of remote and particularized events more than barely probable, of such events as are "contrary to the usual order" anything but improbable, so improbable that "it becomes at least debatable whether any amount of purely traditional or documentary evidence can offset" the presumption against them. It is recognized that Christianity is implicated, as is no other religion, with history; it is even allowed that its entanglement with historical facts was indispensable to its survival in the environment in which it first found itself struggling; but it is strenuously asserted that the historical elements which have thus become connected with it are not essential to it. The historical data with which it has been most intimately associated are gravely disputable; it is, indeed, "just those incidents which theology has attached the greatest dogmatic weight" which have most decisively "been removed from the sphere of the clearly ascertainable to that of the problematical." It is fortunate, therefore, that their reality is not of the highest importance from the religious point of view. Indeed, "religious history often becomes more available and more useful religiously when it is taken as poetry."

> "If we take even the life and character of Jesus, and consider them solely with respect to their inspirational and exemplary value, it is not a question of primary *religious* importance whether that life and character existed in bodily incarnation upon the solid earth of Galilee, or chiefly in the devout imagination of earlier believers. There happen, just now, to be signs of a revival of the theory of the non-historicity of Jesus of Nazareth. . . . Suppose the theory established. . . . There would be some real gain. The Gospels would become more wonderful and more encouraging than before; for the profound wisdom and lofty character found in them would prove to be the expression, not of a single and unique religious genius, but of the spiritual idealism of many humble and unknown men. That a group of men should be able to conceive the hero of the Synoptic Gospels is more inspiring than that one wholly exceptional man should have been that hero — but, for the same reason, doubtless more improbable. In so far, then, as religious history simply affords ideals for our reverence and imitation, the ideals are no worse for their lack of past reality; they were at least the products of some other men's minds, and foreshadowings of possible realities to come, in the human nature of the future. Our feeling with respect to Jesus would undoubtedly be in significant ways altered. . . . But nothing of the deepest religious concernment can be at issue here."

There is much in these remarks which invites criticism. What it concerns us especially to note, however, is that they go beyond the assertion that matters of fact do not enter into the essence of religion, and that Christianity, as it is religion, may be indifferent to them. They seem to suggest that religion may thrive better in an atmosphere of fancy than of reality. Christianity could not only do very well without Jesus; it would perhaps be better off without Jesus. Jesus as a myth might make a stronger religious appeal, might be of a higher religious value, than Jesus as a fact. It would almost seem a pity, religiously speaking, that Jesus ever lived.[19]

All cannot go quite so far as this. It does not appear that even the members of the Bremen *Protestantenverein* go so far. Most are satisfied with pronouncing Jesus unessential to Christianity, indifferent to Christianity, hardly noxious to it. The difference is rooted ultimately in a difference in point of departure. When the point of departure lies in a philosophical system, appeal to historical criticism is essentially in support of conclusions already attained. Most of those who nowadays pursue a line of reasoning substantially the same, begin nevertheless at the opposite pole. Their start is taken from historical criticism, and philosophical considerations are summoned only secondarily and subsidiarily, to give a basis to conclusions already adopted. Precisely the same philosophical assumptions are invoked, but they are not the primary presuppositions of the actual line of thought, and their logic is less prevalent. It is not so much in pride of pure reason and in contempt of history that these reasoners pronounce faith independent of Jesus, although they fall back on pure reason for a standing-ground, and express a hearty distrust in the trustworthiness of historical data. It is rather in timidity in the face of the processes of historical research, and in panic at the aspect of its results, that they seek and find a sheltered position in the independence of faith of historical entities. They are not so much tempted to despise Jesus because He is merely historical as they are tempted to despair of Him for fear He is not historical enough. The Christless Christianity which is springing more and more into view about us, is, in a word, the fruit less of a strong religious mysticism than of a weak historical scepticism, which has become anxious about the religious props on which it has hitherto depended.

It is the historical criticism of the Gospels "from Reimarus to Wrede" which has created the wide-reaching and deeply seated distrust in the historical tradition of Jesus that has of late become so evident. As Paul Wernle himself allows, in the very act of rebuking this distrust as excessive, "to us all it is more or less certain that the evangelists are not Jesus Himself, that they are all already dependent on tradition, and that this tradition has already suffered all kinds of changes, by which the spirit of the disciples has in manifold ways been mingled with the spirit of Jesus." [20] This being so, it is widely felt that no other attitude towards the person of Jesus remains possible except one at best of skepticism. There are in effect a whole series of Jesuses presented to our consideration. There is the dogmatic Christ which the great Christian community has worshipped through the ages with no other thought than that He was assuredly the Jesus Christ of the biblical record. And there is this Jesus Christ of the biblical record which the scientific study of the Bible has split up into several mutually inconsistent personalities. And there is the "historical Jesus" which biblical criticism has hardly and with much variety of interpretation extracted from the presuppositions of the biblical records. Where among these differing Jesuses can faith find a firm footing? The dogmatic Christ, we are told, has evaporated into a myth; the biblical Jesus Christ has been disintegrated into the tesserae out of which its mosaic was formed; the "historical Jesus," itself the product of doubt, remains a doubtful and fluctuating figure. If we are to continue Christians, must we not at least seek for our Christianity a less unstable basis?

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[19] Lovejoy must not be thought singular in this suggestion: it is found also in the philosophers of whom he serves himself heir — for instance, in Kant and in Fichte; and it is intrinsic to the general point of view.

The air in critical circles is fairly palpitating with questions like these. The resulting state of mind finds a clearly argued expression in such a treatise as F. Ziller's *Modern Biblical Science and the Crisis of the Evangelical Church.*[21] The thesis maintained is that the progress of scientific study of the Bible has hopelessly shattered the entire basis on which the faith of the Christian church has hitherto rested. The results even of textual criticism already bring certain of the most cherished church-doctrines into peril. Literary criticism renders it very difficult to repose any real confidence in the biblical writers. And material criticism has cast into the gravest doubt the facts related by these writers which are most indispensable to the established teaching. Finally, the science of comparative religion has reduced the foundations of the central doctrines and rites of the church to the level of heathen ideas and usages. The conceptions and ideas of the Bible have become only elements in the universal history of religions, and the biblical writings themselves only a particular section of general religious literature. The figure of Jesus has been well-nigh wiped off the page of history: the dogmatic Christ, the product of reflection, of course; and the biblical Jesus Christ, a composition of disparate materials, equally of course; but also in large measure the "historical Jesus" himself, which it has been the object of science to disinter. "The historical Jesus, as we have seen, has been set aside by the scientific study of the Bible down to meager remnants, and the foundation of the dogmatic Christ has been obliterated." Is there then anything left to rest upon except an "ideal Christ," a creation of fancy? Ziller, who, despite the ruin of historical Christianity which he sees about him, would fain remain a Christian, insists that there is. There is not, indeed, the "historical Jesus," doubt-born and incapable of sustaining faith, but there is the "historical Christ," which is not an ideal, but a fact. On this fact faith can stay itself.

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[20] *Christliche Welt,* February 17, 1910, col. 147.

[21] "Die moderne Bibelwissenschaft und die Krisis der evangelischen Kirche," Tübingen, 1910, see esp. pp. 99–100.

> "What the altruistic postulates of an inflated egoism, and what the postulates of pure reason cannot avail for, for that neither can those of the 'ideal Christ' avail. That there is such a thing as practised self-renunciation, in contrast to nature; that on the basis of such a self-renunciation there can develop a high world-overcoming life, — this conviction cannot be derived either from the pure reason or from our practical ideals with the certainty that is required by faith, face to face with the known laws of nature. Only a fact can give the certainty for it, and this fact is 'Christ.'

But how is this fact of Christ to be reached? The reply takes the form of an apologue. Ziller writes:

> "All the day long, I have had before me a wide mountain-ridge. In the morning, it stood out, deep-blue, in almost menacing nearness; towards noon, in a like-shaped whitish-grey mist on the horizon; and now, in the evening, it throws over the whole landscape the splendor of a golden reflection. Is it really the same mountain through it all? I think so. . . . What I see is merely the effects which it works on my eye by means of the light straining through the changing atmosphere. What, then, if the mountain were no mountain; if it were only the boundless plain which seems to rise in the distance; if it were only cloud-forms deceiving my eyes? My glance sweeps over the meadows, through which my path runs. The brooks which water it come from yonder. The mountain itself I shall, indeed, not reach; its crags I shall not explore; but I believe in the existence of the mountain.[22]

So, he would say, he believes in the existence of the Christ from whom flow the streams of blessing which gladden the plain of human life. Thus, though the "historical Jesus" has been set aside "down to meagre remnants," the "historical Christ abides unshaken for faith." We seek, and we find, Him, however, not in a book, much less in a creed, but "in the entire, constantly developing Christianity in which we believe."

> "Out of faith in the Christ vitally active here today, there grows up for us faith in the Christ of the past. The predicates which the past ascribed to him, we can no longer ascribe to him in the same sense, but we know how to value them from the standpoint of our faith; and though we no longer connect the same meaning with them, or though we permit them to be supplanted by others which express for *us* what is highest — we do it in the consciousness that we are only carrying forward a process in which the oldest Christianity has preceded us, and which others in their own fashion will follow us." [23]

Despairing of the "historical Jesus," Ziller, in other words, substitutes for Him, as he says, a "Christ who varies with the changes of human thought." Christianity, transforming itself ceaselessly from age to age, finds for itself ever a transformed Christ, suited to its changed needs. Christ, in a word, grows with His church; and it would be as impossible for the church of today to believe in the Jesus of the first Christians as it would be for us to live today the life of two thousand years ago. It is out of the whole history of Christianity that God speaks to us of today, and Christ would be dead, did He not live on in the life of human development.[24]

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[22] *Christliche Welt*, May 5, 1910, col. 413.

[23] *Ibid.*

We are not concerned for the moment with the validity of this representation. Paul Wernle is unhesitant in declaring it nonsense. It is nonsense, he asserts, to speak of modern critical research as having sapped our confidence in the "historical Jesus." There continue to be, no doubt, as there always have been, skeptical writers; in late years, for example, there are Wellhausen, Wrede, Schweitzer; but they must not be taken too seriously. "I do not find that, in its essential traits, the person of Jesus has even in the least become uncertain or controversial through the investigations of recent years."[25] And how, indeed, could historical science, let us honor it ever so highly, "avail against the voice of a history of nearly two-thousand years' duration in which Jesus and faith in Jesus — I purposely bring them together — have been the greatest of impulsive and constructive forces?" It is greater nonsense still, Wernle declares, to pretend to retain Christ when the historical Jesus has been abandoned. Once convince him that the historical Jesus has been set aside by science, and faith in Christ has no further personal interest to him: faith in God without Christ would then be his only recourse. "This whole separation of Jesus and Christ," he adds, "abandoning the one and retaining the other, is nothing but a miserable product of opportunism. It was the weakest point in the old Liberal Christianity, and it has not been bettered by any new grounding. What we retain in our hands when the historical Jesus falls away is just myths and phantasms, which can afford no support to our faith." [26]

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[24] "Die moderne Bibelwissenschaft, etc.," p. 101. Cf. the very similar representation of Shirley Jackson Case, "The Historicity of Jesus," 1912, pp. 306–307.

[25] *Christliche Welt,* February 17, 1910, col. 149.

Meanwhile, however, we observe Ziller abandoning the "historical Jesus" and clinging to the "historical Christ," who "still lives in the church." In this, he but follows an example set by Schleiermacher,[27] and from his day on imitated by a long series of writers occupying essentially the same position, but differing immensely among themselves in the completeness or incompleteness, on the one hand, of their abandonment of the historical Jesus, and, on the other, of their clinging to a living Christ. At the one extreme we may discover — shall we say even a Martin Kähler? or shall we content ourselves with saying a Wilhelm Herrmann? [28] At the

[26] *Christliche Welt,* May 12, 1910, col. 441.

[27] Cf. Otto Kirn, "Glaube und Geschichte," 1900, p. 22: "According to what has been said, we may trace back to Schleiermacher the idea which recurs through the nineteenth century in manifold modifications, that the figure of the Redeemer, ever only uncertainly or indistinctly established by historical research, is lifted, by the experience of his redemptive power continuing in the community, to a certainty and clearness sufficient for faith. The effect of Christ, capable of being experienced by every man seeking redemption, permits (so it is said) the inference to a personality standing at the head of the community, and in union with God, even if we cannot otherwise come to know anything whatever about him that is historically assured."

[28] Cf. what is said of Kähler and Herrmann as representatives of historical skepticism with respect to the "historical Jesus" by Otto Ritschl in an article entitled, "Der geschichtliche Christus, der christliche Glaube, und die theologische Wissenschaft" in the "Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche," iii. 1893, pp. 372 f. "There is accordingly at present no Rationalistic tendency, threatening to bring into question the value for theology of historical investigation. It is true, however, that the confidence which has been hitherto overwhelmingly felt in the result of theological historical research is made doubtful by a skeptical mood which seems to be gaining ground with many theologians. . . . To this skeptical mood . . . Kähler has hitherto given the strongest expression." But Herrmann shares Kähler's historical skepticism, "ascribing to historical research the ability to attain only probable judgments." "In spite of these unfavorable judgments as to the capacity of historical science, Kähler and Herrmann are too deeply persuaded of the nature of Christianity as an historical religion not to lay stress on this — that the Christ which historical research cannot reach with its instruments, but is laid hold of now by faith, is the historical Christ. In contrast with him Kähler speaks of the 'so-called historical Jesus' as a creature of phantastic arbitrariness." See also Karl Dunkmann, "Das religiöse Apriori und die Geschichte," 1911, pp. 44–45.

other stand the theologians of the Bremen *Protestantenverein*. Those who gather around the former node, only sit loosely to the "historical Jesus" as He is presented to us in the Gospel narrative, and can in no way do without the "historical Christ," on whom, indeed, their whole religious system hangs. Those who gather around the latter, though they may or may not, for themselves, feel any real doubt that Jesus really lived, yet are quite able to get along wholly without Him in their religious system, whether we call Him Jesus or Christ. It is these latter, accordingly, who are express "Christless Christians."

Perhaps it may be well to keep near home here and select as examples of this truest Christless Christianity only certain prophets of our own.

A very good example is afforded by Douglas C. Macintosh.[29] With the historicity of Jesus, Macintosh has for himself no difficulty; but neither does he feel any imperative need of the living Christ. He finds the historical Jesus useful; the loss of Him would be a great loss, — a sentimental loss, a pedagogical loss, above all a loss to the easy attainment of Christian certitude. He would even, it appears, allow that the Christ-ideal is indispensable — that it is, indeed, precisely the differentia of Christianity; and he does not see his way to accounting for the clearness at least of this ideal without assuming the historical Jesus, and in this sense, therefore, he is prepared to admit that the historicity of Jesus is "historically indispensable." Indispensable, that is, to the historian, not to the Christian. What the Christian must have is the Christ-ideal, not Christ. "Christian faith is trust in the Christ-like God; whether the Christ be regarded as historical fact or mere ideal, it is trust in the God of holy and unselfish love, whose purpose is the spiritual redemption of humanity and who is revealed in the Christ-like everywhere." Was not Jesus Himself — if He existed — a Christian, the first Christian? And was "the historical Jesus" needed for Him as the presupposition of His faith? We cannot distinguish between the

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[29] *American Journal of Theology*, July, 1911, pp. 362–372; January, 1912, pp. 106–110.

"religion of Jesus" and the "gospel of Christ": the "gospel of Christ" is just the "religion of Jesus." He is not the content of our faith, but only, historically, the first of the series of believers of that particular kind which we call Christian. Say that the series began in another, in a later, than He, and that he is a myth. What essential difference does that make to our faith? The "Christian God-idea" in any case remains; and the "Christian God-idea" is constitutive of Christianity.

> "So far as the content of Christianity is concerned, our religion would remain essentially the same, whatever judgment might be rendered upon questions of historical fact.
>
> "The disproof, or rendering seriously doubtful, of the historicity of Jesus would not mean the disappearance of any essential content from the Christian religion.
>
> "It is not incorrect to say that the essence of Christianity is Jesus Christ, if [Oh that 'if'!] it be recognized that it is also possible to set forth the essence of Christianity without reference to the historic Jesus.
>
> "Granted the historicity of Jesus, was not *his* faith fully Christian? And yet *he* could not make that faith rest upon the historicity of a person of ideal character who had gone before him. If then we believe in the historicity of Jesus, we must admit that Christian faith has been possible in the case of one at least who did not believe in the historicity of any ideal Jesus before his day."

"Without the historical Jesus we may find ourselves with less verification of our faith than we thought." That is a loss; but it is not an irreparable loss, since we may find sufficient verification elsewhere. Meanwhile,

> "Christianity, while enjoying the advantages of historical verification, has this qualification for being the 'absolute' and universal religion, that its fate is not bound up with the actuality of any one reputed fact of history, even when that 'fact' is the one which surpasses every other fact in its value to humanity."

In a single word, Christ does not form any part of the content of Christianity, and therefore His historicity cannot be indispensable to Christianity. "Spiritual religion is self-dependent," and finds all its resources in itself; it cannot therefore be dependent "on the religious experience and inner assurance of another, even though that other be the Jesus of history."

An almost equally good example is supplied by Frank H. Foster,[30] the stress of whose argument is laid on the general consideration that our religious relation cannot rest on the uncertainties of history. His particular manner of phrasing his contention is that "in some important respects it makes no difference to the modern thinker whether Jesus was a historical person or not," because "no system of truth which shall dominate the mind and claim authority over the conduct of man can rest upon the reality of any historical person." "Salvation" is "an inner state of the soul," and therefore cannot be something "'objectively' secured by the work of a historical person." "Truth is truth" only as it "shines to the mind by its own light," and therefore "cannot be something which depends upon the existence of the person who first spoke it." If "salvation," "truth," were thus dependent on the historicity of a person, they "would be exposed to every breath of criticism." They must not be left in that perilous condition.

> "Though Jesus should be proved never to have existed, the truth which has come down to us, and which we have received because of its self-evidencing value, and which we have found to work out such great results in the liberation of our spirits from the thraldom of sin and the establishment of holy relations with our Heavenly Father, would still be true, and its effects would remain unaltered. In this sense, a historical Jesus is unnecessary."

For himself, Foster does not at all doubt that Jesus was an historical person. He confesses, indeed, that "of no single historical detail can we be absolutely sure, unless it be his death by crucifixion"; though, somewhat inconsistently, he at once draws up a tolerably detailed picture of the real Jesus and sets Him before us as "a realized ideal,"—"a realized ideal," moreover, let us note, so lofty that none of His followers could have invented the portraiture. His historicity remains nevertheless unessential, since our real ground, for example, for acknowledging Him sinless, is that this acknowledgment is useful to us — "our final reason for accepting it is its value"; and a "realized ideal" is after all fundamentally an ideal, and owes its existence as such and whatever power it may exert to its erection into an ideal, not to its historical embodiment, if it chances to be historically embodied, in a person. "No system of truth which shall dominate the mind and claim authority over the conduct of men," we will remember, "can rest upon the reality of any historical personality."

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[30] *American Journal of Theology,* October, 1911, pp. 584–598.

It is scarcely necessary to multiply examples further. We may pass from instance to instance; but do not escape from a common circle of ideas. R. Roberts assumes to speak for the class, and may be accepted as doing so, when he announces [31] that "the supreme need of the hour in these matters is the disengagement of religion from its dependence on historical personalities." "Truth is truth," he declares, "whether uttered by Sophocles or Plato in Athens, by Hillel or Jesus in Palestine, by Seneca or Aurelius in Rome." "Religion, too, rests not on inspired or divine personalities, but on the order of the world." "And if, in the inevitable evolution of the not-distant future, Jesus too should disappear from the assured certainties of the world, man would not cease to be religious." P. W. Schmiedel — if we may take advantage of the vogue of his writings in their English form to refer to him here — speaks, with the greater caution of his better scholarship, of the prospect of the elimination of the figure of Jesus from "the assured certainties of the world": "As a critical historian I can only say that I see no prospect of this." And it is a deeper note of personal appreciation of Jesus — and of indebtedness to Him — which he sounds. But the purport of his declaration is the same.

> "My inmost religious convictions would suffer no harm, even if I now felt obliged to conclude that Jesus never lived. It would, of course, be a loss to me, if I could no longer look back and up to him

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[31] *Hibbert Journal,* October, 1909, pp. 100–101.

as a historical person; but I should feel assured that the measure of piety which had long become a part of my nature could not be lost, because I could no longer derive it from him."[32]

Always there lie at the basis of the reasoning the twin assumptions of the old Rationalism: the assumption of the adequacy of pure reason to produce out of its own inalienable endowments the whole body of religious truth which it is necessary or possible for reasonable men to embrace, and the assumption of the inadequacy of history to lay a foundation of fact sufficiently assured to supply a firm basis on which the religious convictions and aspirations of reasonable men may rest. And always there is built upon these assumptions the denial that Christianity, — as it is a religion worthy of the acceptance of reasonable men, and actually exerting influence over reasonable men, and supplying the forms in which their religious life is expressed, — can possibly be dependent for its existence or power on any events or personalities in its past history, no matter how prominent a place these events or personalities may actually have occupied in its historical origination or its continued historical manifestation. The immediate motive which leads to this declaration of independence of historical events and personalities may differ from individual to individual: it is perhaps very commonly a feeling of uncertainty as to the actual historicity of the facts and personalities in question, and a desire to protect what is thought of as Christian faith from the danger incident to this uncertainty. The personal attitude of the reasoners towards Jesus may also differ greatly: most commonly, no doubt, a strong sense of indebtedness to Jesus and a deep feeling of reverence to him are preserved. But the general line of argument remains the same. History can give us only probabilities. Religion, therefore, which requires certainties, cannot be dependent on historical facts. Jesus is at best an historical fact. Christianity, therefore, as it is truly religion, cannot possibly be dependent on Jesus. So far accordingly as Christianity is truly religion, it must be independent of Jesus.[33] What are we to say to these things?

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[32] "Jesus in Modern Criticism," E. T. 1907, p. 85.

It can scarcely be expected that at this time of day the ancient debate with Rationalism should be taken up afresh and threshed out over again. Butler's "Analogy" is still extant, with its initial insistence upon probability as the guide of life, and its solid proof of the reasonableness of an historical revelation. It might not even be amiss to invite those to whom matters of fact appear to be intrinsically doubtful, or at least to become at once on occurrence incapable of establishment beyond "reasonable doubt," to bring their philosophy down to earth by a course of reading in such primary text-books as Greenleaf "On Evidence" and Ram "On Facts." Of course man is a religious being, and by the very necessity of his nature will have a religion. We have not needed to wait for W. Bousset to tell us[34] that religion has its seat in the aboriginal disposition of the reason, and we have only to look within ourselves to find it as the central fundamental law of our life. To name none other, John Calvin has told us long ago that, entering into the very constitution of man, and, above all else, distinguishing him from the brute, there is an ineradicable *sensus deitatis*, which — so far from lying inert within him — is a fertile *semen religionis;* and that accordingly all men have, and must needs have, religion. It is another question, however, whether this constitutional religion, which man cannot choose but have, is adequate to his need in the situation in which he actually finds himself, a situation which Eucken tells us has been most truly appreciated not by the optimists but the pessimists.[35] It is not obvious, to say the least, that a provision of nature must be competent also for unnatural conditions; that a power of living implies also a *vis naturae medicatrix* which in the presence of disease renders the exhibition of remedies impertinent. Though "pure reason" be sufficient for the religion of pure nature, what warrants the assumption that its sufficiency is unimpaired when nature is no longer pure?

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[33] Compare the description of this type of thought by Shirley Jackson Case, "The Historicity of Jesus," 1912, pp. 319 f.

[34] In his address at the Berlin Congress of Free Christianity, 1910, under the title, "Die Bedeutung der Person Jesu für den Glauben." History according to Bousset gives us only symbols, which cannot demonstrate, but only illustrate, the eternal ideas that reside in our bosoms. Founders of religions, Jesus among them, as historical entities, have their place among these symbols. Neither the certainty nor the contents of our faith can find its grounding in symbols. On the one hand, as regards Jesus, "What do we know that is historically certain of this Jesus of Nazareth, his life, his teaching and his person?" (p. 4). Yet, on the other, "the portrait of Jesus as it is depicted in the gospels by his immediate community, as romance and truth, remains and will remain more effective than all attempts at historical reconstruction, however exact they may be" (p. 17). Effective, that is, as a symbol; for as Wobbermin ("Geschichte und Historie in der Religionswissenschaft," 1911, pp. 47 f.) points out, Bousset leaves to Jesus no significance as source of religion.

It was the fault of the eighteenth century, in its pride of intellect and virtue, to neglect in its religious theorizing the evil case of man, and to proclaim under the name of "natural religion" an abstract scheme of a few meagre truths of reason as the sum of all religion, and, as such, the whole religious content of Christianity, the presently dominant religion, — which was thus represented as, so far as it was truly religious, "as old as creation." We have passed beyond the possibility of such shallow intellectualism now; we all repeat with avidity Bernhard Pünjer's caustic jibe that the difficulty with this so-called "natural religion" was that it was neither natural nor a religion. But have we bettered things in the essence of the matter? The misery of humanity may be more poignantly present to our consciousness, and even, in a sense, its sin; religion may be more prevalently thought of as "faith," rather than as opinion; the goodness of God may fill the whole horizon of our thought of him, and loving trust in his love form the entire reaction of our souls in his presence. But are we doing justice to that inexpugnable sense of guilt which constitutes the most fundamental and persistent deliverance of our moral consciousness? Shall we hope to soothe it to sleep with platitudes about the goodness of God; assurances that God is love, and that love will not reckon with sin? That deep moral self-condemnation which is present as a primary factor in all truly religious experience protests against all attempts merely to appease it. It cries out for satisfaction. No moral deduction can persuade it that forgiveness of sins is a necessary element in the moral order of the world. It knows on the contrary that indiscriminate forgiveness of sin would be precisely the subversion of the moral order of the world. The annulment of guilt is the annulment of the law of righteousness, out of the breach of which guilt arises; and the law of righteousness is only another name for the moral order of the world. There is a moral paradox in the forgiveness of sins which cannot be solved apart from the exhibition of an actual expiation. No appeal to general metaphysical or moral truths concerning God can serve here; or to the essential kinship of human nature to God; or, for the matter of that, to any example of an attitude of trust in the divine goodness upon the part of a religious genius, however great, or to promises of forgiveness made by such a one, or even — may we say it with reverence — made by God himself, unsupported by the exhibition of an actual expiation. The sinful soul, in throes of self-condemnation, is concerned with the law of righteousness ingrained in his very nature as a moral being, and cannot be satisfied with goodness, or love, or mercy, or pardon. He cries out for expiation. And expiation, in its very nature, is not a principle but a fact, an event which takes place, if at all, in the conditions of time and space. A valid religion for sinful man includes in it, accordingly, of necessity an historical element, an actually wrought expiation for its sin. It is the very nerve of Christianity and the essence of its appeal to men — by virtue of which it has won its way in the world — that it provides this historical element and proclaims an actual expiation of human sin. As it has been eloquently put: [36]

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[35] See the striking passage on the radical evil which afflicts the human race in "Der Wahrheitsgehalt der Religion," 1st ed., 1901, pp. 72 f.; "The Truth of Religion, 1911, pp. 96 f.

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[36] Otto Kirn, "Glaube und Geschichte," 1900, pp. 47–48. Cf. the whole passage, pp. 47–50.

> "Only the fact that Christ stands out in history as surety of the gracious will of God, that in God's name he punishes sin and calls the sinner to himself, that in holy suffering he endures the lot of sinners in order to convict them of their sin and free them from it, that as the Risen One he brings them the assurance of justification and of eternal life, is able to transform human seeking after salvation into finding. Severed from this fact which forms its very essence, faith is nothing, an empty desire, a question without an answer."

It would be sad for humanity, needing thus above all things an actual expiation that it may have warrant to trust in God's forgiving love, if no such warrant can be given it because of the inability of the human mind to attain certainty with reference to matters of fact. It is, indeed, difficult to see how man could sustain his being and prosecute his common tasks in the world, if matters of fact are intrinsically uncertain, or become immediately uncertain on their occurrence. Man is, after all said, a creature of time and space, and all that he does and all that he experiences takes place in the conditions of time and space, and becomes at once on taking place matter of history. He could acquire no knowledge whatever, the whole discipline of life would be lost to him, if uncertainty were really the mark of the historical. We deceive ourselves, for instance, if we fancy we may distinguish in principle between historical facts as uncertain and scientific facts as certain. As Lessing reminds us, we cannot base certainties on uncertainties; and the material of all the sciences is in point of fact historical. "Every science," observes Eberhard Vischer,[37] "builds its conclusions on the particular experiences which men have had. Every observation in the natural sciences, every experiment, gives us in the first instance not knowledge of what is, but of what at the moment of the observation, of the experiment, the observer experiences. . . .

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[37] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche,* 1898, p. 200, article on "Die geschichtliche Gewissheit und der Glaube an Jesus Christus." Compare also his lecture on "Jesus Christus in der Geschichte," Tübingen, 1912, where the discussion is more popular in form.

An experience had by the scientific observer, therefore an historical fact, is the foundation-stone on which is grounded, as in general the entire conduct of man, so also all scientific attainment." If, then, historical facts are by their very nature uncertain, — "if nothing that befalls man can be certainly known, then all scientific certainty whatever passes into the realm of the impossible."

It may be suspected that the current assumption that historical facts cannot rise above probabilities, derives at least some of its force and persistency from a confusion of two senses of the word "probable." As the opposite of "demonstrative," "probable" refers to the nature of the ground on which the judgment of truth or reality rests; as the opposite of "certain" it refers to the measure of assurance which the grounds on which this judgment rests are adapted to produce. Historical facts may be "only probable" in the one usage and yet not less than "certain" in the other. This ambiguity of the term seems to be reflected in a certain embarrassment which is observable in its use in the present connection. Thus G. B. Foster talks of historical evidence as capable of producing only "probable certainty"; Otto Kirn of it as producing at best only "relative certainty"; while Heinrich von Sybel declares it able to produce "conclusive certainty," — which he then explains by the further declaration that "historical science is capable of attaining to altogether exact knowledge."[38] "Conclusive certainty" is of course pleonastic, and "probable certainty," "relative certainty," are contradictions in terms, the employment of which only bears witness to the feeling of the writers using them that after all historical facts are, or may be, "certain." Let it go at that. In point of fact, there is nothing more certain than a matter of fact: what is, certainly is; and the certainty of demonstration cannot be more sure than the certainty of experience. It is no more sure that two and two make four, than that the two nuts which I have in each hand when brought together are four, — though I arrive at my certainty in the one case *a priori* by demonstrative reasoning, and in the other *a posteriori* by actual experience. The ground of certainty in both cases is my confidence in my faculties.

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[38] Ueber die Gesetze des historischen Wissens," 2. Abdruck, 1864, p. 17; or in "Vorträge und Aufsätze," 1874, p. 11.

It may be urged, to be sure, that history, as commonly spoken of, deals only with past experiences, and it is only present experience which is "certain." But experience does not cease to be experience with the passage of time: and (as it has been well phrased) "reality that has been made" is no less reality than "reality in the making"; "reality once 'made,' is 'made' for ever."[39] If what is, certainly is, then what has been, just as certainly has been; and its actuality as matter of fact is not in the least disturbed by the irrelevant circumstance that it has occurred at one point of time rather than at another. Indeed, as the writer just cited playfully points out, distance of time may be neutralized by distance in space. To an observer on the dog-star, earthly events which to an observer on earth occurred a generation ago are present-day facts; and by merely stationing ourselves at the proper distance we may recover any occurrence of the past to "immediate perception." We cannot, to be sure, take our post of observation at will in Orion or the Pleiades, but we need not on that account cast the actuality of the actual into doubt or declare ourselves incapable of assuring ourselves of it. If free transportation through the immeasurable reaches of space is denied us, there are other ways of getting at the actualities of the past which we need not on that account deny ourselves.

For one thing, we need not persist in looking at past occurrences as each an isolated event, standing absolutely out of relation with all other events, up to which therefore no lines of approach lead. Past events still live in other vibrations also, besides those which, trembling through the ether, carry notification of their occurrence to the depths of space. Everything that occurs affects everything else that occurs, and history must be conceived not merely as a series of linked chains passing side by side through time; but as one woven network covering the whole past, and running with unbroken web through the present into the illimitable future. Not by one line only but by manifold lines, therefore, we can travel from any point which for the moment may chance to be the present, over the woven pattern of the fabric to any other point, which holds changelessly its proper position in the whole, and its fixed relations to all the other parts of it. Of course, such creatures as we are cannot contemplate the whole pattern in all its details; we are like insects climbing slowly along a thread of some tapestry. There are myriads of occurrences of even the recent past which are gone beyond all hope of recovery. At best we can know a few of the events that have occurred, and them only in part. But the past is not singular in this. We do not know the present, even that present with which we are most intimately concerned, in all of its details, or in any of its details perfectly. We know nothing except in part. Every sparklet of human knowledge shines out from a limitless surrounding of obscurity. But we can yet know truly where we can know only in part. And because we cannot know all the past, we must not therefore fancy that we can know nothing that is past. There are occurrences which stand out so brightly against the enveloping darkness, which have wrought so powerfully on the course of events that have succeeded them, which are connected with us by so many and so deeply marked lines of effects, that we might as well pretend not to be able to see the sun in the heavens as not to be able to perceive them looming in the past, however distant. There are no doubt some who do not see the sun. They are blind.

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[39] F. R. Tennant, "Historical Fact in Relation to the Philosophy of Religion." *Hibbert Journal,* viii. 1909–1910, p. 173.

Whether the origins of the Christian religion belong to this class of outstanding facts — the great peaks rising out of the plain with such prominence that no observer looking over the field of history can miss them — is merely a question of the evidence. This evidence is, however, of the most compelling and varied kind. It is not merely documentary, subject to those processes of testing which we lump together under the name of criticism. It is institutional as well; and it is more than institutional. The seed out of which Christianity has grown may be known, like other seed, by that which has grown out of it: "by their fruits ye shall know them." Christianity itself is a witness to the nature of its origins; and to Christianity must be added the whole world in its development through two thousand years. It is futile to ask, as has been asked with the processes of historical criticism in mind: "Is any one entitled to believe, or to ask others to believe, in specific historical matters of fact except upon historical evidence?"[40] The question is already answered by Lessing in that striking refutation of his own historical skepticism which he gives in his "Axiomata":[41]

> "There is still one question over which I cannot wonder enough, which the Herr Pastor puts with a confidence that seems to imply that only one answer is possible. 'Had the New Testament books not been written, and had they not come down to us,' he asks, 'would there have remained in the world a trace of what Jesus did and taught?' God forbid that I should ever think so meanly of Christ's teaching as to dare to answer this question with a No. No, I would not repeat such a No, even had an angel from heaven dictated it to me, to say nothing of a case where it is only a Lutheran pastor who would put it into my mouth. All that occurs in the world leaves traces in the world behind it, even though men can not always point them out at once; and should Thy teaching only, divine Friend of man, which Thou didst command, not to be written but to be preached, have effected nothing, absolutely nothing, from which its origin might be recognized? Should Thy words have been words of life only when transformed into dead letters?"

[40] A. O. Lovejoy, *Hibbert Journal*, v. January, 1907, p. 269. Cf. the much more cautious statement of O. Ritschl, "Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche," iii. 1893, p. 376. *Per contra*, cf. Eberhard Vischer, "Jesus Christus in der Geschichte," 1912, pp. 35 f.: had the historical records preserved for us no single intimation of the existence of a Dante, the existence of the Divina Commedia would compel his postulation, and had historical records preserved for us no single intimation of the existence of Jesus Christ, — or, what comes to the same thing, should historical criticism obliterate every existing intimation of his existence, — there are effects about us, quite as palpable as the Divina Commedia, which would compel his postulation.

[41] Lessing's "sämtliche Schriften," Lachmann's ed., xiii. p. 120.

We are not fleeing from the results of historical criticism to take refuge in the argument from effects. We shall appeal, indeed, from a naturalistically biased to an unbiased historical criticism; but we shall have no difficulty in trusting the latter to give us not only an actual Jesus, but a supernatural Christ, and in Him a supernatural redemption. We are only concerned now to point out that even such a vindication of the fact-basis of Christianity on historico-critical grounds does not exhaust the evidence for it; that there is still further evidence of the richest and most varied kind for the origin of Christianity in a supernatural founder; that there is, for example, the evidence from effects, which, resting as it does on the causal judgment, has much of the quality of demonstration.[42] "What then is it," asks a recent writer,[43] "which gives us knowledge of what has been?" "Three things," he answers, "monuments, traditions, effects"; and then he adds another well-known saying of Lessing's: "When the paralytic *experiences* the healing shocks of the electric spark, what does he care whether Nollet or Franklin, or neither of them, is right?"[44] — and concludes: "So may the pious man be of good courage, while the learned are disputing over particular problems of the gospel-history. But as to the presence and as to the nature of the power which then came into the world, he too has a little word to say." He has. And though this "little word" may not be quite the same word which either this writer or Lessing might suggest, it is a word which has supreme value, and which combines with the abundant evidence from other quarters and of other orders to render the facts which belong to the origins of Christianity the most certain of all the facts which have occurred in the world.[45]

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[42] The value of the argument from effects in establishing historical facts is expounded at length by Eberhard Vischer as cited above, and applied in detail to the facts of the Christian origins. Cf. the review of the lecture, "Jesus Christus in der Geschichte," in *The Princeton Theological Review* for October, 1912, pp. 654–659.

[43] *Christliche Welt,* February 17, 1910, coll. 162–163.

[44] Axiomata, 1778; Lessing's "sämtliche Schriften," Lachmann's ed., xiii. p. 134. Lessing is in this passage defending this proposition as previously made by him, and denying that he considers this experimental evidence the only convincing evidence of the truth of Christianity.

We are not absurdly undertaking to prove the historicity of Jesus in ten words. Happily, our present task does not require this proof of us; and happily also, as has already been intimated, the work has been perhaps sufficiently done for us — though in many more than ten words — by a multitude of recent writers who have sprung to the defence of the historicity of Jesus against its denial by the new radicalism most prominently represented at present by Arthur Drews. One of the results of the promulgation of this denial for which we may be thankful has been that some check has been put upon the less guarded expression of historical skepticism on the part of the liberal theologians, and there has been called out some stronger assertion and fuller exposition of the more positive side of their conception of the historical origins of Christianity than it has been usual for them to give.[46] This has been a gain. Much has, no doubt, been left to be desired, but it has been pleasant to see such writers as W. Bousset and Johannes Weiss take up even so far the rôle of "apologists." What we have been attempting to do is merely, by a brief statement of the actual state of the case with reference to the historicity of Jesus, to wash in a background against which the true character and significance of the Christless Christianity which is being exploited about us may be thrown up into clear relief. There really is no occasion for a panic with reference to the historicity of Jesus; and there is no need of such drastic measures as those pursued by the promulgators of our Christless Christianity to allay the rising panic with respect to it. It is only among the old Liberals and — on somewhat different grounds — the members of the school of Ritschl that panic here is natural. The mordant criticism of the evangelical history practised by the old liberals has left them without defence when this criticism is pressed a step further and the historicity of Jesus is denied,—requiring, though they do, the historicity of Jesus not only to account for the origin of Christianity according to their view of its origin, but to give distinctiveness and distinction to their conception of what Christianity is. It has been the peculiarity of the school of Ritschl, in its effort to preserve Christianity from destruction by the assaults of historical criticism no less than by those of philosophy and science, to proclaim the independence of faith of all historical facts as well as of all metaphysical notions. What defence have they when the fact of Christ is included in the facts of which Christianity is independent? Yet "the fact of Christ" bears with them the whole weight of Christianity.[47] Our Christless Christians have passed beyond all this. Indifference to Christ may have much the same practical effects as denial of the existence of Jesus; but it is a specifically different attitude and throws into the foreground specifically different questions. It has no interest in the historicity of Jesus. It has no interest in the living Christ. Its sole interest is in Christianity. It does not follow, however, that the historicity of Jesus has no bearing on it; or the nature of the Jesus who is historical. Conceivably, a real Jesus may be more difficult to ignore than an imaginary one; especially if the Jesus that is real is a Jesus whom it is not easy to ignore, who has brought into the world influences and set at work forces which cannot be disregarded or escaped. In any event it is important to approach the consideration of Christless Christianity with a clear understanding that the Christ it would ignore is not a doubtful Christ but a real Christ, is not an inert Christ but an active Christ.[48]

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[45] "Jesus," says Erich Foerster (*Christliche Welt,* 1909, col. 1249), "is a fact in the history of our race, and this fact cannot be eliminated by any dilettantism, however scientifically garnished. He who does not wish to turn his back on all reality must recognize it and adjust himself to it."

[46] Heinrich Weinel, "Ist dast 'liberale' Jesusbild widerlegt?" 1910, has been particularly candid in chiding his colleagues for their excesses in the one direction and their shortcomings in the other.

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[47] On the Ritschlian attitude to historical facts and its sequences cf. E. Cremer, "Der Glaube und die Thatsachen," in "Greifswalder Studien: theologische Abhandlungen Hermann Cremer . . . dargebracht," 1895, pp. 261–283; G. Vos, "Christian Faith and the Truthfulness of Bible History," in *The Princeton Theological Review*, iv. 1906, pp. 289–305.

[48] Richard Rothe even a half-century ago sounded a warning against

The particular question raised meanwhile by Christless Christianity is not that of the historicity of Jesus but that of the nature of Christianity, or, as it is fashionable nowadays to phrase it, "the essence of Christianity." It is only when "Christianity" has come to be looked upon as little more than a modern man's "religious reaction upon the whole realm of reality — past and present — available for him," "the total embodiment of the actual religious attainments of modern men in a modern environment" — whatever this "reaction," these "attainments," may chance to be — as it has been described by a not wholly unsympathetic historian,[49] that the question of the indifference of "Christianity" to Jesus can be seriously raised. Douglas C. Macintosh[50] very frankly allows that to all that has hitherto borne the name of Christianity the historicity of Jesus has been indispensable, or, to speak more adequately, the living Jesus has stood at the very centre of thought and faith. To the "early disciples of Jesus," whose faith hinged on the messiahship of Jesus; to "the Greek Christian development," whose entire teaching and trust turned on the reality of a divine incarnation in humanity; to "Christian faith in its mediaeval form, whether Romanist or Protestant," which grounded all its hope in the substitutive sacrifice of the God-man — to all these alike Jesus forms the very core of Christianity. It is only when historical — or if the word pleases better, traditional — Christianity has suffered a sea-change and become "the Christianity of to-day," that it can be contented that "the disproof or rendering seriously doubtful of the historicity of Jesus need not mean the disappearance of any essential content from the Christian religion." The question thus concerns not Christianity in its historical sense, but "our religion," "of to-day"; and it might

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attempting to root faith in the *merely* historical Jesus, who lived and died two thousand years ago. "If," he declared, "this Christ is not to be altogether ignored and stricken out of history, if he is to be permitted to play any rôle and to be believed in at all, he must absolutely be conceived also as the *living* Christ."

[49] S. J. Case, as cited, p. 321.

[50] *American Journal of Theology,* xv. July, 1911, pp. 364 f.

perhaps be better phrased, not, Is Christ essential to the Christian faith? but, Is the so-called Christianity of today to which Christ is not essential still Christian?

Ernst Troeltsch has treated the matter more at large and with his wonted thoroughness and candor in a lecture which he has recently published under the title of "The Significance of the Historicity of Jesus for Faith."[51] The question which he here raises is twofold: first, whether it is "still" possible to speak of an inner essential significance of Jesus for faith; and secondly, whether, that being answered in the negative, the historicity of Jesus is therefore indifferent to the "Christianity" which alone remains possible for modern culture. This latter question also Troeltsch answers with a negative, and thus comes forward as the advocate of the indispensableness of Jesus to even the most attenuated faith which still cares to call itself Christian. "So long as there exists a Christianity in any sense whatever it will be bound up with the central place of Christ in worship."

The word "still" in the former member of Troeltsch's question intimates that in his view a change has taken place in men's conception of what Christianity is and imports, and that it is only because of this change that the question suggested can be raised. Troeltsch does not hesitate to speak of this change as a veritable "transformation[52] of Christianity." Formerly Christians have believed in a divine Christ "propitiating God and thus freeing men from the consequences of their infection with original sin." To raise the question of the historicity of Jesus from this standpoint would be simply to call in question the right of Christianity to exist. It is only when we have learned, like David Friedrich Strauss (in his Christian period), to distinguish between the principle of Christianity and the person of Christ, and have come to see that what we call Christianity is just "a particular faith in God, a peculiar knowledge of God, with its corresponding mode of life, or, as it is called, a religious idea, a religious principle," — so that there is no historical redemptive work postulated in the background, — that we may ask ourselves with any meaning whether there exists any necessity for the assumption of an historical Jesus. Even on this ground, however, a negative answer is not to be taken for granted. There even exist some who have come so far, — to whom therefore "redemption is not something once for all completed in the work of Christ, and thereafter only to be applied to individuals, but an occurrence continually completing itself afresh in the action of God on the soul by means of the knowledge of God" wrought by faith, — to whom a negative answer is still impossible. This is because they "connect this redeeming faith-knowledge with the knowledge and recollection of the historical personality of Jesus, although this comes into consideration with them, not in its miraculous element, nor in its particular teachings, but only in the total effect of the religious personality." It is "the later, ecclesiastical Schleiermacher" that Troeltsch has in view here, and especially Ritschl and Herrmann. With them "all notion of a historical redemptive miracle, occurring once for all," indeed, is lacking; but with them also the faith-knowledge that constitutes Christianity is "bound to the historical personality of Christ, by which alone power or certitude is lent it." In this, he contends, there is betrayed lurking at the back of the brain a remnant of the old doctrine of original sin; there persists a notion "of the essential incapacity of men who do not know Christ for hearty faith in God." To such a conception, questioning of the historicity of Jesus were as fatal as to the old orthodoxy itself. Only when we occupy ground which allows no inward necessity for the assumption of an historical Jesus, can we discuss with any meaning whether the historical Jesus is indispensable to Christianity.

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[51] "Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben," Tübingen, 1911. Cf. the review of it in *The Princeton Theological Review* for October, 1912, pp. 647–654.

[52] "Umwandelung," p. 8.

Troeltsch himself occupies this ground, and therefore admits that the indispensableness of Jesus to Christianity is to him a legitimate matter of debate. He holds very decided views, however, in the matter. Even on this ground he argues

— and it is the chief purpose of his lecture to argue this — that Christianity cannot get along without Jesus. His argument is based on considerations derived from the history of religions and religious psychology, and amounts in general to the contention that religion is, after all said, a social affair and cannot persist without cultus and communion; while these require a rallying-centre, which must be envisaged as real; and this rallying-centre in the present stage of culture cannot be anything but Jesus Christ. The persistence of even this type of religious belief hangs thus on the historicity of Jesus, and whenever, if ever (Troeltsch thinks they will never), the results of historical research shall prove unfavorable to the historicity of Jesus, then the death-knell of even this type of religious faith is sounded. This is, he assures us, the last word of social-psychological research in the realm of religion.[53]

The question thus defined and debated is, however, little more than an academic one. Troeltsch does not pretend that the extremely attenuated "Christianity" to which alone the question of the indispensableness of the historical Jesus has meaning, possesses vitality as a religion. Individuals may profess it and do profess it; he professes it himself; but the churches in which religious life is rich and powerful, are, he tells us, of a very different faith. We may be interested to know that even in this, its most attenuated form, "Christianity" cannot, in the opinion of one of our chief masters in the psychology and phenomenology of religion, dispense with Jesus. But the real question which presses for an answer is whether this very attenuated "Christianity," in which alone the question of the indispensableness of Jesus to Christianity can with any meaning be raised, possesses any just claim upon the name of Christianity. Its adherents are no doubt prompt in asserting their right to the name. But the allowance of their claim depends upon the prior question of what precisely Christianity is, and what kinds of "transformation" it can suffer without ceasing to be Christianity. If Christianity is only a particular way of conceiving God, with the emotional and volitional accompaniments and consequences of this way of conceiving God, then no doubt a particular way of conceiving God may claim to be Christianity, — that is, if it be the particular way of conceiving God which Christianity is. If Christianity, however, be anything more than just a way of conceiving God, it is hard to see what just claim a mere way of conceiving God can put in to the name.

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[53] "In the central position of the personality of Jesus, Christianity does not possess a distinguishing peculiarity, separating it from all other religions, and for the first time making redemption possible, but only fulfils a general law of the spiritual life of man after a fashion peculiar to itself" (p. 42).

We should not omit to note in passing that Troeltsch goes a step further than contending that Jesus is indispensable to Christianity even in that attenuated form of so-called Christianity to which he gives his adhesion. He contends that no other form of religion than this attenuated Christianity with Jesus enshrined at its centre can exist in the conditions of modern life. In a word, Jesus is to him indispensable to religion in the conditions of modern life. This is not, to be sure, quite the same as saying with Heinrich Weinel, that "after Jesus it is his religion or none." Troeltsch is not prepared to declare Christianity "the eternal religion," which can never be transcended. But he is prepared to insist that Christianity — of course, in the interpretation of Christianity which commends itself to him — is so bound up with, and gives such competent expression to, the religious side of the civilization of the Mediterranean basin, that so long as that civilization endures, so long must Christianity remain the only religion possible to civilized humanity. It is possible, of course, that the civilization of the Mediterranean basin may after a while be replaced by a still higher civilization; and then, no doubt, there will arise a new form of religious expression conformable to the new civilization. Christianity is thus not pronounced by Troeltsch the final, the absolute religion, but merely the only religion possible to the highest civilization as yet known to man. His defence of the indispensableness of Jesus means, then, only that we cannot in his opinion get along at present without Jesus.[54] After a while — who can tell? — as we advance beyond our present stage of culture, we may advance also beyond Christianity as a possible religion, and beyond the need of Jesus as the religious rallying-point of men.

The question of course springs at once into the mind whether, in thus representing Christianity as merely the natural and therefore necessary religion for the civilization of the Mediterranean basis, and Jesus as indispensable only for the religion belonging to that civilization, — which is not final but may pass away, — Troeltsch has not rendered this Christianity impossible as a religion for himself at least — if not for the Mediterranean basin — and thus emancipated himself from Jesus as the indispensable rallying-point of his religion. He himself certainly thus assumes a standpoint above the Christianity which he conceives as — at least possibly — only a stage in the journey of man towards the absolute religion, and he cannot possibly belong inwardly to its life-world. Can he, then, look to Jesus, the inspiring centre of this life-world, as really indispensable to his own faith? Must he not stand as much above the need of the inspiration of Jesus as he stands above the religious life which Jesus inspires, and so by his own definition exclude himself from the Christian name?[55]

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[54] Troeltsch's remarks in this connection provide a useful commentary upon the discussion in his "Die Absolutheit des Christentums und die Religionsgeschichte," 1902. The adherents of Christianity as of all other religions, he tells us there, live in a naïve belief in the absoluteness of their religion, due to failure to compare it with others and a natural estimate of their actual knowledge of the higher life as ultimate and unique. Christianity's claim to absoluteness is, no doubt, the most inwardly free and universal of all; and when Christianity has attained its new form, in which alone it appeals to modern man, it comes near to justification. Troeltsch can even say: "The claim itself" — i.e., to absoluteness — "has nowhere as yet been refuted or surmounted, and no imagination is capable of excogitating such a surmounting; and so it remains that no other foundation is laid for the soul's health of mankind except Jesus Christ" (p. 126). After a while, however, we here learn, it is possible that a new and better foundation may be laid. On the whole matter cf. C. W. Hodge, "The Finality of the Christian Religion," in Biblical and Theological Studies by the Members of the Faculty of Princeton Theological Seminary, 1912, especially pp. 477 f.; also F. X. Kiefl, "Der geschichtliche Christus und die moderne Philosophie," pp. 61–74.

[55] Otto Kirn, "Glaube und Geschichte," 1900, pp. 31–32, speaking of the

In any event, by his refusal to recognize the Christianity to which, he argues, Jesus is indispensable, as "the eternal religion," Troeltsch certainly takes his place among those who deny that Jesus is indispensable to the religion, if not of today, yet of tomorrow.

Meanwhile why should the definition of the essence of Christianity be so vexed? Why should there be so much controversy over the application of the name? There surely ought to be little difficulty in determining what Christianity is. We need not disturb ourselves greatly about the debate which has been somewhat vigorously prosecuted as to whether its definition should be derived from its New Testament presentation or from its whole historical manifestation.[56] Impure as the development of Christianity has been, imperfect as has always been its manifestation, corrupt as has often been its expression, it has always presented itself to the world, as a whole, substantially under one unvarying form. Unquestionably, Christianity is a redemptive religion, having as its fundamental presupposition the fact of sin, felt both as guilt and as pollution, and offering as its central good, from which all other goods proceed, salvation from sin through an historical expiation wrought by the God-man Jesus Christ. The essence of Christianity has always been to its adherents the sinner's experience of reconciliation with God through the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ. According to the Synoptic tradition Jesus Himself represented Himself as having come to seek and to save that which is lost, and described His salvation as a

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demand of faith for absoluteness, remarks: "A simply provisional revelation, a merely relative religious truth, an only probable reconciliation with God, and a purely conjectural assurance of salvation, — these are, not merely for a church, but for the religious nature, intolerable ideas. A religion which would see in Christ only a transition point of the religious development of mankind would have, even in an historical judgment, no right whatever to call itself Christian."

[56] J. Weiss, "Jesus von Nazareth," 1910, p. 7: "That the 'essence of Christianity' is to be found not merely in the New Testament, but in the entire fulness of its historical phenomena, there should today be no longer doubt." Cf. E. Vischer, "Ist die Wahrheit des Christentums zu beweisen?" 1902, p. 16.

ransoming of many by the gift of His life, embodying this conception, moreover, in the ritual act which He commanded His disciples to perform in remembrance of Him. Certainly His first followers with single-hearted unanimity proclaimed the great fact of redemption in the blood of Christ as the heart of their gospel: to them Jesus is the propitiation for sin, a sacrificial lamb without blemish, and all their message is summed up in the simple formula of "Jesus Christ and Him as crucified." Nor has the church He founded ever drifted away from this fundamental point of view, as witness the central place of the mass in the worship of its elder branches, and the formative place of justification by faith in Protestant life.[57] No doubt parties have from time to time arisen who have wished to construe Christianity otherwise. But they have always occupied a place on the periphery of the Christian movement, and have never constituted its main stream.

We can well understand that one swirling aside in an eddy and yet wishing to think of himself as travelling with the current — or even perhaps as breaking for it a new and better channel — should attempt to define Christianity so widely or so vaguely as to make it embrace him also. The attempt has never been and can never be successful. He is a Christian, in the sense of the founders of the Christian religion, and in the sense of its whole historical manifestation as a world-phenomenon, who, conscious of his sin, and smitten by a sense of the wrath of God impending over him, turns in faith to Jesus Christ as the propitiation for his sins, through whose blood and righteousness he may be made acceptable to God and be received into the number of those admitted to communion with Him. If we demand the right to call ourselves Christians because it is by the teaching of Jesus that we have learned to know God as He really is, or because it is by his example that we have been led into a life of faithful trust in God, or because it is by the inspiration of His "inner life," dimly discerned through the obscuring legends which have grown up about Him, that we are quickened to a like religious hope and aspiration, — we are entering claims that have never been recognized and can never be recognized as valid by the main current of Christianity. Christianity as a world-movement is the body of those who have been redeemed from their sins by the blood of Jesus Christ, dying for them on the cross. The cross is its symbol; and in its heart sounds the great jubilation of the Apocalypse: "Unto Him that loveth us and loosed us from our sins by his blood; and he made us to be a kingdom, to be priests unto his God and Father; to Him be the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen."

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[57] Emil Sulze may be adduced in passing as a witness to this fact. Writing on "Die notwendige Umgegstaltung der evangelischen Glaubenslehre" (*Protestantische Monatsheft,* xi. 1907, pp. 250 f.), he declares that "the greatest danger has been brought, as to the moral life so also to faith in God, by the circumstance that the old Protestantism held fast to the foundation-stone of Catholicism, to the doctrine of the substitutive satisfaction of Christ." He is deeply grieved, therefore, that the Protestant churches of Germany still sing:

Mein Gewissen beisst mich nicht,
Moses kann mich nicht verklagen.
Der mich frei und ledig spricht,
hat die Schulden abgetragen.

To make it truly "Christian," this verse, he declares, must be transformed into this:

Klagt mich mein Gewissen an,
lässt doch Gott mich nicht verzagen,
stärkt mich auf der Leidensbahn,
hilft mir Schuld und Strafe tragen.

The antipodal attitudes to redemption of the Old Protestantism and the "transformation" which would fain present itself as a New Protestantism could not be more vividly expressed.

A Christianity without redemption — redemption in the blood of Jesus Christ as a sacrifice for sin — is nothing less than a contradiction in terms.[58] Precisely what Christianity means is redemption in the blood of Jesus. No one need wonder therefore that, when redemption is no longer sought and found in Jesus, men should begin to ask whether there remains any real necessity for Jesus. We may fairly contend that the germ of Christless Christianity is present wherever a proper doctrine of redemption has fallen away or even has only been permitted to pass out of sight. Of course in the meantime some other function than proper redemption may be found for Jesus. We are not insensible, for example, of the importance of the function assigned to Him in, say, the Ritschlian theology; and we quite agree when Troeltsch urges that to the proper Ritschlians, therefore, Jesus is indispensable. But we cannot close our eyes to the artificiality of the Ritschlian construction, and we cannot put away the impression that the indispensable rôle assigned to Jesus, as it rests rather on inherited reverence for His person than on the logic of the system, is, in a word, only an interim-measure. Why should an influence from Jesus be needed to awake man to faith-knowledge? And how could such a creative influence be exerted by a personality so slightly known, or an "inner life" so vaguely discerned through the mists of time? Herrmann, for example, expressly denies that there is any direct communion of the believer with the exalted Christ; everything is mediated through the "community." All this, therefore, will easily fall away and the actual influence which begets faith be assigned, as Otto Ritschl, for instance, does assign it, to the "community,"[59] while to Jesus there is left little more than the

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[58] It is of course generally recognized that Christianity is in its essence a religion of redemption. See for example its exposition as such by Eucken, "The Truth of Religion," E. T. 1911, pp. 10 f., where Christianity is described as specifically the religion of redemption from sin. But, as Troeltsch expresses it, the idea of redemption has been "transformed" to suit modern notions. It often happens, therefore, that definitions of Christianity recognize the specific peculiarity of Christianity in words while evaporating it in meaning. Thus Schleiermacher ("Glaubenslehre," 2té Aufl., § 11) describes Christianity as "a monotheistic form of faith belonging to the teleological tendency of piety, distinguished from other similar forms of faith essentially by this —

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that in it everything is referred to redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth." Here the wide genus to which Christianity is assigned is monotheistic religion, and the proximate genus, teleological (that is, ethical monotheistic) religion, while its differentia within this proximate genus is found in the fact that "in it everything is referred to redemption accomplished by Jesus of Nazareth." If they could be read without reference to the special use of terms by their framers, definitions such as this might be taken as loose descriptions of what Christianity really is. They bear witness to the difficulty experienced by writers of a different point of view in escaping from accustomed terminology.

[59] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche,* iii. 1893, p. 388. In the number of the *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* for July, 1912 (pp. 244–268), which

rôle of first Christian. And so soon as Jesus becomes merely the first Christian, He at once, as Macintosh justly urges,[60] ceases to be indispensable for subsequent Christians. Why should not they, as well as He, rise out of the void? He may be the first of the series: that is an accident. Being the first of the series He may have set an example which works powerfully through all subsequent time; He may even have left precepts and directions which smooth the path of all who would adventure the Christian walk with Him; above all He may have by His "inner life" of perfect trust in His Father become an inspiration which throbs down all the years. He may, in other words, be exceedingly useful. But indispensable? To be indispensable He must be something more than a teacher, an example, an inspiration. He must be a creator. And to be a creator, He must be and do something far more than the first Christian, living in realization of the fatherhood of God. Whenever Jesus is reduced in His person or work to the level of His "followers," His indispensableness is already in principle subverted and the seeds of a Christless Christianity are planted.

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has come to hand since this article was sent to the printer, Wilhelm Fresenius subjects Troeltsch's Lecture to a detailed criticism from the Ritschlian standpoint and in the name of the Ritschlians repudiates the representation that the historicity of Jesus is indispensable to faith. Ritschlians mean only, it seems, that they themselves find in Jesus what they need for faith: they do not mean that others may not attain faith by some other way (p. 250). With them "faith rests not on 'historischen' but on 'geschichtlichen' facts," that is to say, on genuine "life-experiences"; and (p. 262) "accordingly faith can look quietly on while criticism does its work, and openly accept its results: it could even endure that the unhistoricity of Jesus should be proved — a thing which, to be sure, has not been done and which sober historical criticism, moreover, will scarcely maintain is likely to be done in the future, — but in principle this case would not turn the scale for faith, that is, so long as faith remains conscious that it is of historical (geschichtlichen) nature and the historical (geschichtliche) fact on which it bases itself ultimately, can be neither established nor refuted by historical (historischen) science. According to Fresenius, therefore, it is a matter of indifference to Ritschlians whether there ever was any "historical Jesus" or not: it is only necessary that they should have had a genuine "experience." This is a full-fledged "Christless Christianity."

[60] *American Journal of Theology,* xvi. January, 1912, p. 110.

The application of this principle will, no doubt, carry us far. When Auguste Sabatier, for example, tells us[61] that the whole of Christianity is summed up in the parables of the prodigal son and of the publican, he is intent only on abolishing from Christianity the idea of satisfaction. But does he not by necessary consequence with it abolish also Jesus Himself, so far as His indispensableness to the Christian religion is concerned? In point of fact, these parables have a Jesus in them as little as a satisfaction. Sabatier very naturally teaches us, therefore, that there is no uniqueness in Christ's work, nothing in it "isolated and incomprehensible." "The sufferings and death of the righteous and the good operate in the same way as the passion of Christ upon the conscience of the wicked"; "all God's servants" have stood by the side of Jesus as, along with Him and in the same sense (though not in the same degree), our saviours. We need not, however, journey so far from home for an example. When Horace Bushnell expends the first Part of his "Vicarious Sacrifice" in proving that there is "nothing superlative in vicarious sacrifice, or above the universal principles of right and duty," that in what Christ did, He did "neither more nor less than what the common standard of holiness and right requires," and what was "no way peculiar to him, save in degree," he has already thrown the door wide open for a Christless Christianity.[62] He may himself be preoccupied in vindicating to Jesus some kind of uniqueness, if not in the nature, yet in the effect of His work. But this is not intrinsic to the system, and easily falls away. The assimilation of Christ to His followers in the nature of His work and the kind of effect wrought by it is logically fatal to His indispensableness to the religion of which He is still thought of as the founder.

There are other forms of teaching, also, that have enjoyed great vogue, in which the indispensableness of Jesus is, to say the least, not explicit. One such, oddly enough, finds incidental expression in a criticism by Shailer Mathews of Macintosh's separation of Christianity from Christ.[63] Mathews very properly questions whether the issue raised by Macintosh's reasoning "does not really involve the momentous question as to whether we are not in the process of evolving a new phase of religion from historic Christianity"; and as properly remarks that the retention of the name Christianity for "what we regard as ideal," even though it is not historically traceable to Jesus or to Paul, "would not be the first time that the effort has been made to submerge New Testament teaching in general culture, and in much the same fashion of substituting dehistoricalized, speculative systems for a Christianity with historical content." He expresses hearty agreement with Macintosh, however, in one thing. It is this: that "saving faith, in the personal religious sense, does not wait upon the verdict of the higher criticism as to the historicity of Jesus." Why? Because, apart from the higher criticism, that is, apart from all scientific scrutiny of the gospel records, there is reason enough for trusting our all to Jesus? No. Because Jesus is not necessary to "saving faith, in the personal religious sense"! "Men are not saved by mere orthodoxy or heterodoxy," Mathews remarks,— inconsequently, since nobody ever supposed they were. But then he adds positively: "In the sense that their wills are one with God's, men who have never heard of Jesus have been and are to be saved."

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[61] "The Doctrine of the Atonement, and its Historical Evolution," E. T. 1904, pp. 123–133. Cf. also the review of the book in *The Princeton Theological Review,* iii. 1905, pp. 505–509.

[62] Cf. especially "Vicarious Sacrifice," New York, 1866, p. 107, and 2d ed., i. New York, 1877, p. 107.

The doctrine here enunciated is practically the doctrine which has played a large part in theological controversy— witness the "Andover debate" of a quarter of a century ago —under the name of the "essential Christ." According to it, men can exercise "saving faith" without any knowledge of Christ; that is to say, as Mathews suggests, their "religious faith, however imperfect," may "possess a quality" that makes them "one with those who through the clearer revelation and deeper certainty given by Jesus also trust God as fatherly and so partake of the divine spirit." In this very prevalent doctrine, there is obviously a very express preparation for a Christless Christianity. In the form given it by Mathews it has indeed already fairly passed over into Christless Christianity. He conceives the function of Jesus to be to induce trust in God as fatherly; and he conceives that men can exercise and do exercise a faith which has this "quality," apart from any action upon them by Jesus. This is already the announcement that Jesus may be dispensed with — all that He is and all that He does — for some. Some attain saving faith without Jesus; some — no doubt, more easily — with Him.[64] More commonly a higher function is attributed to Jesus. He has, it is said, made atonement for sin; on the basis of this atonement men may be saved. He has shed down His Spirit, quickening faith in men; their faith, therefore, though exercised in ignorance of Him, has its warrant, and its source, and its effect from Him. Their salvation is accordingly from Christ, and by Christ, and in Christ, though they are ignorant of all this. In proportion as this higher doctrine is approached, in that proportion is the preparation made for a Christless Christianity less explicit. But even in it, there is an implicit preparation for it. A Christ of whom you are unconscious is at best in some sense a Christ who does not exist for you: and if everything He may be for you depends upon your consciousness of him, a Christ of whom you are unconscious does not exist at all for you. A salvation apart from knowledge of Christ is always liable to be conceived as a salvation apart from Christ. In Mathews' construction, though he is in the act of repelling a Christless Christianity, it actually becomes salvation without Christ. He speaks of it only with reference to some. But if some may thus be saved without Christ, why not all? There seems no compelling reason, on Mathews' ground, why Jesus should be proclaimed, or why He should exist, at all.

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[63] *American Journal of Theology,* xv., October, 1911, pp. 614–617. For an uncompromising assertion of the point of view here intimated by Mathews see J. Warschauer, "Jesus: Seven Questions," 1908, pp. 206–233; "Is Belief in Him Necessary?" Warschauer has no hesitation in declaring that "there is no room in a civilized theology for a doctrine which would limit salvation to those professing any one form of religious belief" (p. 230).

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[64] This is not nowadays a rare point of view. Emil Sulze, for example, who is very much afraid the honor due to God shall be accorded to Jesus, gives repeated expression to it. Paul Mehlhorn (*Protestantische Monatshefte,* v. 1901, p. 190) describes Sulze's view, with references to his "Wie ist der Kampf um die Bedeutung der Person und des Wirkens Jesu zu beendigen?" 1901, as follows: "Although now Sulze emphasizes that faith is an immediate work of God in us, so that there are circumstances in which it can arise without the mediation of acquaintance with Christ and the church, yet it would be in his view a terrible loss for the individual if he did not permit himself to be helped forward and given assurance in this matter by history and its pioneering personalities. Just as a German statesman 'who had not formed himself on Stein and Bismarck must remain a pitiable beginner' (p. 34), so for the clarifying and establishment of our faith, 'the person of every child of God' is 'for us a means of grace in God's hand,' while Christ is and abides 'by his unique vocation . . . the perfectly unique means of grace for us' (p. 35)."

Sulze, however, is more hospitable to the idea of the independence of "Christian" faith of Christ than Mathews. Neither complete peace nor complete assurance can be had, he urges, without a free attitude towards Jesus himself. And quite after the manner of Macintosh, he argues: "And is the attitude to God which is here described not the same as that which, according to all that we know of him, was occupied by Christ himself? He did not win love to his Father in Heaven in dependence on an historical person. God himself gave him what he revealed by him" (*Protestantische Monatshefte,* xi. 1907, p. 247). His views as to the dispensability of Jesus are more or less clearly expressed in a number of articles in the *Protestantische Monatshefte.*

We may learn from Otto Ritschl[65] that a very similar line of thought may be developed on Ritschlian premises. Ritschl is examining W. Herrmann's doctrine of faith. According to Herrmann, man finds the living God not within himself, where mysticism bids him seek Him, but solely in the personal life of Jesus. Christian faith is thus made to carry with it "a clear consciousness of its conditioning through the personal life of Jesus." This, Ritschl thinks, is too narrow a view. He asks:

> "What are we to hold respecting such Christians as lack a clear consciousness of the inner possessions for which they are indebted to Christ? Or is it also deficiency in complete faith when a Christian in prayer to his God and Father seeks and finds firm support in the cares and tasks and strifes of life, without at the same time recalling Christ as the sole revelation of this God; although he has failed in this perhaps only because he lacked the

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[65] *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche,* iii. 1893, pp. 380–388.

spiritual energy to grasp the religious conception of God and that of Christ in one and the same prayer-idea? Can we doubt that such Christians have faith in the full sense, because the theoretical consideration leads to conceiving Christian faith in general not apart from a clear consciousness of its conditioning through Christ's personal life?"

It is plain fact, he urges, that the fruits of faith are reaped where this clear consciousness is not present; and it is equally plain fact that this clear consciousness can be present and no fruits of faith show themselves: the question obtrudes itself "whether the conscious but unfruitful or the fruitful but unconscious faith is the more valuable." Clear consciousness must obviously be looked upon as only occasional, as "a special charism"; some have it, in others it is "latent or undeveloped."

> "Wherever world-overcoming faith, recognizable in its fruits, is found, it must be referred back to the influence of Christ, whether the believing subject is conscious of this connection or not. On the other hand, it should be recognized, in opposition to Herrmann, that the faith which does not bring with it a clear consciousness of its conditioning through Christ, but which nevertheless is actually conditioned through Christ's operations, is only mediately grounded on the personal life of Jesus. Immediately, however, the ground of such faith is the Christian life practised in the sense of Christ in the community. And only in this also do the vital activities of Christ propagate themselves from generation to generation."

Jesus may have been needed, then, to set the course of Christian life going in the world. After that He may safely be forgotton. There is no obvious reason why He may not be forgotten by the whole Christian community, — why the memory of Him may not fade entirely out of the world, — and still faith be continued through the influence of the faith-exercising community; just as motion once induced in the first of a series of balls in contact with one another may be transmitted to the last ball, though it is touched actually only by the penultimate one. A fully developed Christless Christianity may thus grow out of Christ Himself; if you will only permit us to think of Christ as providing merely the initial impulse and then withdrawing out of sight.

It has been thought worth while to bring into view these remoter tendencies of thought making towards Christless Christianity, that the numerous pathways may be kept in mind along which men may travel, from depreciation of the function of Christ in "redemption," through neglect or forgetfulness of Him, to actual denial of His indispensable place in the religious life of Christians. These pathways, while very direct, are also no doubt often somewhat long. That is to say, the passage from unconsciousness to conscious disregard of Christ is made logically much more quickly than it is practically. From the practical point of view the distance that separates the conscious from the merely virtual denial of the indispensableness of Jesus to faith is beyond doubt immense. The phenomenon which now faces us is that this immense space has been actually overstepped by many about us. There are many still calling themselves Christians who have come to the pass that, not inadvertently or by way of logical implication merely, but in the most heedful manner in the world, and by express declaration, they turn away from Jesus as no longer possessing supreme significance for their religious life. They deliberately pronounce Him unnecessary for their faith, and seek its source and ground and content elsewhere. No doubt, they exhibit differences among themselves. George B. Foster, who surely ought to know, distinguishes two varieties. He says:

> "To-day [66] there are two kinds of spirits which dream of a Christianity without Christ: the weak and the strong. The weak are those who have received all the priceless blessings which we possess in Christianity, only at third or fourth hand. They have been refreshed, nourished, led by these blessings — whence they came is of little concern to them. . . . The others are the strong. They know very well that Christianity sprang from Christ. But one does not now need him longer. Were they to be quite frank, they would say that he, not entirely unlike miracles, had come to

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[66] "The Finality of the Christian Religion," 2d ed., 1909, p. 331.

> be something of a hindrance. . . . But would it not poorly serve the expansion of Christianity, the pervasion of the world with Christianity, and one's own peace and joy in Christianity, to drain off the fountain? Is not their view much the same as if we were to sever the connection of our arteries with the heart whence the blood comes?"

The criticism is apt, from the Christian point of view: apt, though not quite adequate. From the Christian point of view it may very properly be said (though this is far from all that needs to be said) that those who are advising us that Christianity can get along very well without Christ are very much like men sitting by a brookside and reasoning that since we have the brook we do not need the spring from which it flows, and may readily admit the doubt whether there is a spring. If even this criticism does not seem valid to our Christless Christians, that can only be because they no longer occupy the Christian point of view.

The point which needs particular pressing lies, indeed, just here, — that in thus separating themselves from Jesus as the source and ground and content of their faith, they sever themselves from Christianity and proclaim themselves of another religion. By some odd tangle of thought they may still declare themselves Christians, though they no longer hold to Christ or look to Him for redemption from their sins. They have learned, we are told, from David Friedrich Strauss (in his Christian period) to distinguish between the principle of Christianity and the person of Christ. The discovery of this distinction was, we know, with Strauss "the first step which counts" towards we know what end. May we not commend to those who follow him in this first step the example which he set them when he opened his eyes at last and saw whither it really had conducted him?

> "Therefore, my conviction is that, if we are not dealing in evasion, if we do not wish to tack and trim, if we do not desire to say Yea, yea, and Nay, nay, — in short, if we speak like honest and candid men, we must confess that we are no longer Christians."[67]

[67] "Der alte und der neue Glaube," 1872, p. 90; cf. p. 143.

Why should there be any hesitation in the matter? A Christianity to which Christ is indifferent is, as a mere matter of fact, no Christianity at all. For Christianity, in the core of the matter, consists in just, "Jesus Christ and Him as crucified." Can he be of the body who no longer holds to the Head?

What is, after all, the fundamental difference between Christianity and other "positive" religions? Does it not turn just on this — that the founders of the other religions point out the way to God while Christ presents Himself as that Way? It is primary teaching that we receive, when we are told:

> "Buddha and Confucius, Zarathustra and Mohammed are no doubt the first confessors of the religions which have been founded by them, but they are not the content of these religions, and they stand in an external and to a certain extent accidental relation to them. Their religions could remain the same even though their names were forgotten, or their persons replaced by others. In Christianity, however, it is altogether different. To be sure the notion is occasionally given expression that Christ too does not desire to be the only mediator and He would be quite content that His name should be forgotten, if only His principles and spirit lived on in the community. But others who for themselves have wholly broken with Christianity have in an unpartisan fashion denied and refuted these notions. Christianity stands to the person of Christ in a wholly different relation from that of the religions of the peoples to the persons by whom they have been founded. Jesus is not the first confessor of the religion which bears His name. He was not the first and most eminent Christian, but He holds in Christianity a wholly different place. . . . Christ is Christianity itself; He stands not outside of it but in its centre; without His name, person and work, there is no Christianity left. In a word, Christ does not point out the way to salvation; He is the Way itself." [68]

[68] Herman Bavinck, "Magnalia Dei," p. 312.

VIII

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHRIST

THE TWENTIETH-CENTURY CHRIST[1]

WHAT may very properly be called the Chalcedonian "settlement" has remained until today the authoritative statement of the elements of the doctrine of the Person of Christ. It has well deserved to do so. For this "settlement" does justice at once to the data of Scripture, to the implicates of an Incarnation, to the needs of Redemption, to the demands of the religious emotions, and to the logic of a tenable doctrine of our Lord's Person. But this "settlement" is a mere statement of the essential facts, and therefore does nothing to mitigate the difficulty of the conception which it embodies. The difficulty of conceiving two distinct natures united in a single person remains; and this difficulty has produced in every age a tendency more or less widespread to fall away from the doctrine, or to explain it away, or decisively to reject it. Weak during the Middle Ages, this tendency acquired force in the great intellectual upheaval which accompanied the Reformation; and then gave birth, amid many other interesting phenomena, to the radical reaction against the doctrine of the Two Natures which we know as Socinianism. The shallow naturalism of the Enlightenment came in the next age to the reinforcement of the movement thus inaugurated, and under the impulses thus set at work a widespread revolt has sprung up in the modern church against the doctrine of the Two Natures.

Germany is today the *præceptor mundi.* And how things stand in the academical circle of Germany Professor Friedrich Loofs informs us in his recent Oberlin lectures. "The whole German Protestant theology of the present time," he tells us, has, "to a certain extent," turned away from the conception of the Two Natures. "In the preceding generation," it seems, "there was still a learned theologian in Germany who thought it correct and possible to reproduce the old orthodox formulas in our time without the slightest modification, viz.: Friedrich Adolph Philippi, of Rostock (1882)." "At present," however, Loofs proceeds, "I do not know of a single professor of evangelical theology in Germany of whom this might be said. All learned Protestant theologians in Germany, even if they do not do so with the same emphasis, really admit unanimously that the orthodox Christology does not do sufficient justice to the truly human life of Jesus, and that the orthodox doctrine of the two natures in Christ cannot be retained in the traditional form. All our systematic theologians, so far at least as they see more in Jesus than the first subject of Christian faith, are seeking new paths in their Christology." No doubt matters have not yet gone so far in lands of English speech; but the drift here, too, is obviously in the same direction, and even among us an immense confusion has come to reign with regard to this fundamental doctrine of the Christian religion.

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[1] From *The Hibbert Journal,* xii. 1914, pp. 583–602.

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The alternative of two natures is, of course, one nature: and this one nature must be conceived, naturally, either as Divine or as human. The tendency to conceive of Christ as wholly Divine — so far as it has asserted itself at all — has been rather a religious than a theological tendency, if we may avail ourselves here of this overworked and misleading terminology. It has existed rather as a state of heart, and as a devotional attitude, than as a reasoned doctrine. Nothing has been more characteristic of Christians from the beginning than that they have been "worshippers of Christ." To the writers of the New Testament, the recognition of Jesus as Lord was the mark of a Christian; and all their religious emotions turned to Him. It has been made the reproach of the Evangelists that they — following their sources — were all worshippers of Jesus: and it is precisely on that ground that modern naturalistic criticism warns us that we are not to trust their representations as to His supernatural life on earth. To the heathen observers of the early Christians, their most distinguishing characteristic, which differentiated them from all others, was that they sang praises to Christ as God. A shrewd modern controversialist has even found it possible to contend that the only God the Christians have is Christ. "Christianity," says he, "is pre-eminently the worship of Christ. Far away in the background of existence there may be a power, answering to Indian Brahma or Greek Kronos and conceived as God the Father. But the working, ever-living, ever-active Deity is Christ. He is the creator and preserver of the world, the ruler, redeemer, and judge of men. He and no other is worshipped as God, hymned, prayed to, invoked. To Him have been transferred the attributes of Jehovah. He and no other is the Christian God." If there is some exaggeration here, it is not to be found on the positive side; and G. K. Chesterton is not overstating the matter when he speaks of Christ incidentally as "the chief deity of a civilisation."

This worship of Christ has had, of course, theological results of great importance, some of them even portentous — if, for example, we can with many historians look upon adoration of saints, and especially of the Virgin Mary, as, in part at least, an attempt of the human spirit to supply, outside of the Christ thought of as purely Divine, the human element in the mediatorially conceived Divine relation. But only now and again has it worked back and sought a theological basis for itself by the formal divinitising of the whole Christ. We think here naturally of the Apollinarians, and the Monophysites; but more particularly of confessional Lutheranism, which by its theory of the *communicatio idiomatum* managed to preserve indeed to theology a human nature for Christ, but at the same time to present a purely Divine Christ to our religious emotions. But we shall have to go back to the Gnostic Docetism of the first Christian centuries for any influential effort speculatively to construe Christ as a wholly Divine Being. If men have here and there forgotten the human Christ in their reverence for the Divine Christ, they have shown no great inclination to explain Christ to thought in terms of the purely Divine.

Revolt from the doctrine of the Two Natures means, therefore, nothing more or less than the explanation of Christ in terms of mere humanity. When we are told by Loofs that the whole of learned Germany has rejected the doctrine of the Two Natures, that is equivalent accordingly to being told that the whole of learned Germany has rejected the doctrine of the Deity of Christ, and construes Him to its thought as a purely human being. It may continue to reverence Him; men here and there may even continue to worship Him. As many of the older Unitarians found it possible still to offer worship to Christ, and incorporated in their official hymn-books hymns of praise to Him as God — such as Bonar's "How shall Death's Triumph end?" in which Christ is celebrated as "The First and Last, who was and is," or Ray Palmer's "My Faith looks up to Thee," in which he is addressed as "Saviour Divine" — so many of our new German Humanitarians still worship Christ. Karl Thieme, for example, who righteously rebukes his fellows for continuing to use such phraseology as "the Godhead," "the Deity," "the Divinity" of Christ, when they know very well that Jesus is not God but only man, yet strenuously argues that He is worthy of our worship, because of what he calls His "representative unity with God." When asked how his worship of Jesus differs in principle from the gross hagiolatry of the Church of Rome, Thieme naïvely and most significantly replies, Why, in this most important respect, that he worships only *one* such holy one, the Romanists many! The adoring attitude preserved by men of this class towards Jesus — whom they nevertheless declare to be mere man — has called out not unnaturally in wide circles a deep disgust. They are not unjustly reproached with idolatry, are contemptuously dubbed "Jesusites" — worshippers of the man Jesus; and occasion has even been taken from their corrupt Jesus-cult to inaugurate a movement in revolt from Christianity as a whole, wrongfully identified with them, in the interests of a pure and non-idolatrous service of God. Men like Wilhelm von Schnehen and Arthur Drews are thus able to come forward with the plea that in their philosophical cult alone can be found true worship, and do not hesitate to declare that the greatest obstacle to pure religion in the world to-day is precisely this idolatrous adoration of Jesus, interpreted as merely a human being. We can only record it to their honour, therefore, when the majority of those who have given up the Deity of our Lord refuse to worship Him, and, while according to Him their admiration and respect, reserve their religious veneration for God alone.

The present great extension of purely humanitarian conceptions of the person of Christ has, of course, not been attained without a gradual development, in the progress of which there has been enunciated a variety of compromising views seeking to mediate between the doctrine of the Two Natures and the growing Humanitarianism. The most interesting of these is that wonderful construction which has been known under the name of Kenotism, from its vain attempt to intrench itself in the declaration of Paul (Phil. ii. 8) that Jesus, being by nature in the form of God, emptied Himself — as our Revised Version unfortunately mistranslates the Greek verb from which the term, Kenosis, is derived — and so became man. The idea is that the Son of God, in becoming man, abandoned His deity, extinguished it, so to speak, by immersing it in the stream of human life. This curious view bears somewhat the same relation to the tendency to think of Christ in terms of pure humanity that the Lutheran Christology bears to the opposite tendency to think of Him in terms of pure deity. As that was an attempt to secure a purely Divine Christ while not theoretically denying His human nature, so this was an attempt to secure a purely human Christ without theoretically denying His Divine nature. In effect it gives us a Christ of one nature and that nature purely human, though it theoretically explains this human nature as really just shrunken deity. Therefore Albrecht Ritschl called it *verschämter Socinianismus* — Socinianism indeed, but a Socinianism differing from the bold Socinianism to which we are accustomed by shyly hanging back and trying to hide itself behind sheltering skirts.

Kenotism differs from Socinianism fundamentally, however, in that Socinianism took away from us only our Divine Christ, while Kenotism takes away also our very God. For what kind of God is this that is God and not God alternately as He chooses, and lays off and on at will those specific qualities which make God the kind of being we call "God," as a king might put off and on his crown, or as a leopard might wish to change his spots but cannot, or an Ethiopian his skin? Of course, this is all — as Albrecht Ritschl again aptly described it, and as Loofs repeats from his lips — "pure mythology"; and the only wonder is that it enjoyed considerable vogue for a while, and, indeed, has not yet wholly passed out of sight on the outskirts of theological civilization. Loofs seems to raise his eyebrows a little as he remarks that, as it has gradually died out in Germany, it has seemed to find supporters in England: "in Sweden, too," he adds, with meticulous conscientiousness, "it was confidently defended as late as 1903 by Oskar Bensow." The English writers to whom he thus refers are men of brilliant parts — such as D. W. Forrest, W. L. Walker, P. T. Forsyth, and latest of all H. R. Mackintosh. But even writers of brilliant parts will not be able to fan the dead embers of this burned-out speculation into life again. The humanitarian theorizers are in search of a true man in Jesus, not a shrivelled God; and no Christian heart will be satisfied with a Christ in whom (we quote Ritschl again) there was no Godhead at all while He was on earth, and in whom (we may add) there may be no manhood at all now that He has gone to heaven. It really ought to be clear by now that there cannot be a half-way house erected between the doctrines that Christ is both God and man and that Christ is merely man. Between these two positions there is an irreducible "either or," and many may feel inclined to adopt Biedermann's caustic criticism of the Kenotic theories, that only one who has himself suffered a kenosis of his understanding can possibly accord them welcome.

On the sinking of the Kenotic sun beneath the horizon, there has been left, however, a certain afterglow hanging behind it. A disposition is discoverable in certain quarters to speak in Kenotic language while recoiling from the Kenotic name; to claim as a Christian heritage the essential features of the Kenotic Christology while declining to lay behind them the precise Kenotic explanation. An isolated early instance of this procedure was supplied by Thomas Adamson, who draws a portrait of Jesus in his "Studies of the Mind in Christ" (1898) which seems to require the assumption of kenosis to justify it, but who vigorously repudiates the attribution of that assumption to him. Much more notable instances are found in such writers as Johannes Kunze of Vienna (now of Greifswald) and Erich Schäder of Kiel, whose formula for the incarnation is that in Jesus Christ the Godhead is "presented in the form of a human life." According to Kunze the Godhead appears in Jesus always as humanly mediated: the two, Godhead and manhood, can never be contemplated apart; all that is human is Divine, and all that is Divine is human. The omnipotence which belongs to His deity appearing in Christ only as humanly mediated, for example, is conditioned on His *prayer;* Jesus could accomplish all things by the power of prevalent prayer! So also with all the Divine attributes; the result being that we have in Jesus phenomenally nothing but a man, but a man who, we are told, is nevertheless to be thought of as the Eternal God.

Similarly, according to Schäder, God in becoming flesh has not at all ceased to be what He was; He has only become it "in another way." In the place of the doctrine of the Two Natures, Schäder places the idea of what he calls "the Being of God in Jesus"—*das Sein Gottes in Jesus*—a phrase which becomes something like a watchword with him. "We have here," he says, "a man before us to whom there is lacking not the least thing that is human, a man who is man in everything, be it what it may"; and yet who is just God become flesh, "having ceased to be nothing which He eternally is," but "having only become it in *another* manner." By what a narrow line this doctrine of "God in human form" is separated from express Kenotism may be observed from the difficulties in which Schäder finds himself when he comes to speak of the act by which the mighty transformation, which he postulates in the Son of God, takes place. Here his language is not only distinctly Kenotic, but extremely Kenotic, assimilating him in his subordinationism and transmutationism to what Loofs does not scruple to speak of as the "reckless" teaching of Gess. "Now, God our Father," he writes, "lets it, lets this Son proceed from Himself as man, and *thus* enter into history. This is an almighty act of His love, of His reconciling will": "what is in question here is an almighty transformation of the mode of being of the Logos by God." When we are thus told that, "by God's almighty act, God's eternal Son becomes a weak, developing child," we are not so much reassured as puzzled that we are told in the same breath that thus "He does not cease to be what He was, He only becomes the same thing in another way"; nor are we much helped by having it explained to us that even in His pre-existent state the Son of God, because He was Son, was dependent on God, subordinate to Him, and wrought only God's will — so that even in His pre-existent state He used prayer to God, preserved humility in the Divine presence, and lived in obedience to God. It is only borne strongly in upon us that it is an exceedingly difficult task at one and the same time to evaporate and to preserve the true Deity of Christ.

The fundamental formulas with which Kunze and Schäder operate — that the incarnation consists in "the Being of God in Christ," that "God is in Christ in human form" — reappear in perhaps even more purity in the writings of the late R. C. Moberly. "Christ," he says, "is, then, not so much God *and* man, as God in, and through, and as man." "God, as man, is always, in all things, God *as man*"; "if it is all Divine, it is all human too." So also W. P. Du Bose wishes us not to forget that "God is most God at the moment when He is most love," and not to fail to recognise God "in the highest act of His highest attribute," confusing external pomp with internal nobility — all of which has the appearance at least of being only a way of laying claim to the inheritance of the Kenotists, while avoiding the scandal of the name. Reviewing Du Bose, Professor Sanday falls in with the notions he here expresses, and pronounces it likely that the moderns in their insistence on the single personality of our Lord, which is both Divine and human — and, apparently, Divine only because it is perfectly human, — have made an improvement on the old Two Nature doctrine of the Creeds. We may perceive from this how completely the movement is but a phase of the zealous propaganda for a one-natured Christ, and but propounds a new method of submerging God in man. This method is to proclaim the paradox that God is most God when He ceases to be God — when He becomes man. For this condescension marks the manifestation at its height of the highest of all the activities of God — Love.

But we may perceive here, too, what may also legitimately interest us, a stage in the drifting of Sanday's Christological views towards the apparently humanitarian position at which they seem ultimately to arrive. In earlier writings Sanday had taught with clarity the essentials of the Trinitarian Christology, and had pronounced himself unfavourable to the Kenotic speculations. In this review of Du Bose he falls in, however, with Kenotic modes of expression; and soon afterwards he is found confessing himself in some sense a Kenotist — while, nevertheless, in the act of propounding what seems really to be a merely humanitarian Christology. For Sanday's final suggestion is to the effect that we should think of Christ as the man into whose subconscious being — which is to be conceived as open at the bottom and through that opening in contact with the ocean of Deity which lies beyond — the waves of this ocean of Deity wash with more frequency, fullness, and force than in the case of other men, and so with more frequency, fullness, and force make themselves felt in the upper stratum of His being, His conscious self, also than in the case of other men. At the basis of this suggestion there lies a mystical doctrine of human nature, which makes the subliminal being of every man the dwelling-place of God.

If we only go down deep enough into man's being, we shall find God; and if the tides of the Infinite only wash in high enough, they will emerge into consciousness. Man differs from man, no doubt, in the richness and fullness with which the Divine that underlies his being surges up in him and enters his consciousness; and Jesus differs from other men in being in this incomparably above other men. There is Deity in Him as well as humanity; but not Deity alongside of humanity, but Deity underlying and sustaining His humanity — as Deity underlies and sustains all humanity. The mistake of the orthodox Christology has been to draw the line which divides the Deity and the humanity vertically: let us draw it rather horizontally, "between the upper human medium, which is the proper and natural field of all active expression, and those lower depths which are no less the proper and natural home of whatever is Divine." Thus we shall have a Christ whose life, though, "so far as it was visible, it was a strictly human life," yet "was, in its deepest roots, directly continuous with the life of God Himself." That the same may be said in his measure of every man Sanday expressly affirms, and he as expressly identifies this Divine element which is to be found at the roots of the being of both Christ and all other men with what the Scriptures call "the indwelling of the Holy Spirit." Christ thus becomes just the man in whom the Holy Spirit dwells in greater abundance than in other men. He is not God and man; He is not even God in man; He is man with God dwelling in Him — as, though less completely, God dwells in all men. We have reached here a Christology which substitutes for the incarnation a notion which librates between the two conceptions of the general Divine immanence and the special indwelling of the Holy Spirit. According as the one or the other of these conceptions is given precedence will it find its affinities, therefore, with one or another widely spread form of the humanitarian theorizing now so popular. For there are many about us who, declaring Jesus to be no more than man, wish to explain the Divine that is allowed also to be found in Him on the basis of the Divine immanence; and there are equally many among us who wish to explain it on the basis of the Divine indwelling or inspiration.

Those who occupy the former of these standpoints are prone to speak of Jesus as " a human organism filled with the Divine thought." This conception may be presented in a very crass form, or it may be clothed in very beautiful language and made the vehicle of very fervent expressions of reverence for Christ. " I see," explains James Drummond, " in the beauty of a rose a Divine thought, which is no other than God Himself coming unto manifestation through the rose, so far as the limitations of a rose will permit; but I do not believe that the rose is God, possessed of omniscience, omnipotence, and so forth. . . . So, there are those who have, through the medium of the New Testament and the traditional life of the purest Christendom, looked into the face of Jesus, and seen there an ideal, a glory which they have felt to be the glory of God, a thought of Divine Sonship which has changed their whole conception of human nature, and the whole aim of their life. . . ." Such a conception, we are told by its advocates, is far superior to the " masked God " of current orthodoxy; it " exalts Christ above all men, and gives Him a place at the right hand of God." He was, no doubt, only a man — a human organism — but He was a man whose " attitude of will was such that God could act upon Him as upon no other in the history of humanity." " From the dawn of consciousness the human Christ assumed such an ethical uprightness before God that God could pour Himself out on Christ in altogether exceptional activities." In Him " for the first and only time the Almighty was granted His opportunity with a human soul," and, " as the Master kept Himself in unique ethical surrender to God, God acted upon Him in such a manner as to make the metaphysical relationship also unique. The ethical uniqueness implies and renders inevitable its corresponding metaphysical uniqueness of relation to God." For, we are told, " it is possible for God so to fill a responsive heart with His own spirit that every word of that soul becomes a word of God, that every deed becomes a deed of God, that every feeling reveals the loving heart of God willing to suffer with His children. In short, the life becomes such a life as God Himself would live were it possible for Him to be reduced to human circumstances. God could not suggest any improvement. He would find this soul such an open channel that He could at last pour Himself out to the utmost drop. There would be such complete mutual sympathy that the sorrows of God would become the sorrows of this soul, and the sorrows of this soul the sorrows of God. If in a moment of distress at the onslaught of sin the soul should cry out, 'Why hast Thou forsaken me?' the distress would be as real to God as to the soul, for every sorrow of either God or this soul would cut both ways. The soul would become God's masterpiece. God would throw Himself into its development with such flood that the metaphysical relationship would be beyond anything known to humanity, and beyond anything attainable by humanity. As the supreme work of the Father, and as the supreme response to the ethical cravings of the Father, such a creation could be called in the highest sense the Son of God."

Perhaps we may say that the exaltation of the man Jesus could go little further than this. And we can scarcely fail to observe that we have before us here a movement of thought running on precisely opposite lines from that of the Kenotic theories. In them we were bidden to observe how God could become man; in this we are asked in effect whether it may not be possible to believe that in Jesus Christ man became God. We are naturally reminded at this point that consentaneously with the rise of the Kenotic theories in the middle of the last century there was born also a contradictory theory — that of Isaac A. Dorner — which, with a much more profound meaning, proposed to our thought a solution of the problems of the incarnation which formally reminds us of that just described. Dorner, beginning with the human Jesus, asked us to watch Him become gradually God by a progressive communication to Him of the Divine Being, so that, though at the start He was but man, in the end He should become in the truest and most ontological sense the God-man. The difficulties of such a conception are, of course, insuperable; it would compel us to think of the Godhead as capable of abscission and division, so that it could be imparted piecemeal to a human subject, or of manhood as capable by successive creative acts of being itself transmuted into Godhead. But it was inevitable that this theory, too, should leave some echoes of itself in the confused discord of modern thought.

We hear these echoes in the high christological construction of Martin Kähler. We hear them also in the lower theories of Reinhold Seeberg. According to Seeberg, Jesus Christ is just a man whom the willing God has created as His organ and through whom the personal will of God has so worked that He has become fully one with this personal will of God. "The will of God," he says, "chose the man Jesus for His organ, and formed Him into the clear and distinct expression of His Being. He emphasizes the personal character of the Divine will in Jesus, but he allows no second hypostasis in the Godhead as its Trinitarian background. In his view we can admit the eternal existence of only one thinking and willing Divine personality, though in that one personality there co-existed a threefold tendency of will. That particular tendency of the Divine will-energy which aims at the realization of a church, manifests itself in the man Jesus, and so fully takes possession of Him that in Him it becomes for the first time personal and makes Him really the Son of God. Before God thus created Jesus into His organ there was no second ego standing over against the Father; there pre-existed in the eternal God only the eternal tendency of will to create a church. "What is peculiarly Divine in Christ" is therefore only "the peculiar will-content which we can distinguish from other will-contents, the tendency of the Divine will to the historical realization of salvation." Seeberg thinks that thus he does justice to the Godhead of Christ. He looks upon Him as the Redemptive Will of God forming as organ for itself a human subject and coming to complete personality in it. "Jesus," he says, "in the peculiar contents of His soul is God." "Herrschaft," authority, therefore belongs to Him; but also "Demut," humility; but especially "Herrschaft," for is He not the personal Son of God, the only personal Son of God that ever was or ever will be? "That ever will be," we say: for the question arises, what has become of this personal Son of God now that His life on earth is over and He has ascended where He was before? As before the "Incarnation" the particular Divine will of salvation was not a Divine personality over against the Father, but acquired personality only as it flowed into the human person, Jesus Christ, and formed Him to its organ — has it, now that this man Jesus has passed away from earth, lost again its personality and sunk again into merely the tendency of the Divine will making for salvation? It is Karl Thieme who asks this question. For ourselves, we may be content with observing that in Seeberg's construction it is not God, but only the Divine will of salvation, that becomes incarnate in Jesus Christ; and that Jesus Christ is therefore not God, but only, as we say in our loose everyday language, "the very incarnation" of the Divine will of salvation. We see in Him, not God, but only the will of God to save men — and this seems only another way of saying that Christ is not Himself God, but only the love of God is manifested in and through Him. What we get from Seeberg, then, is obviously not a doctrine of the incarnation, but only another form of the prevalent doctrine of Divine indwelling or inspiration, and it is because of this that Seeberg's theory seems to Friedrich Loofs one of the most valuable of those recently promulgated.

In an interesting passage Loofs selects out of the results of recent speculation the three conclusions which he considers the most valuable, and thus reveals to us his own christological conceptions. These are: "First, that the historical person of Christ is looked upon as a human personality; secondly, that this personality, through an indwelling of God or His Spirit, which was unique both before and after, up to the ending of all time, became the Son of God who reveals the Father, and became also the beginner of a new mankind; and, thirdly, that in the future state of perfection a similar indwelling of God has to be realized, though in a copied and therefore secondary form, in all people whom Christ has redeemed." The central point in this statement is that Christ is a man in whom God dwells. "The conviction," remarks Loofs in his explanation of his views, "that God dwelt so perfectly in Jesus through His Spirit as had never been the case before, and never will be till the end of all time, does justice to what we teach historically about Jesus, and may, at the same time, be regarded as satisfactorily expressing the unique position of Jesus, which is a certainty to faith." He is willing to admit, indeed, that he does not quite know what the dwelling of the Spirit of God in Jesus means; and, indeed, he is free to confess that he does not understand even what is meant by the "Spirit of God." And he agrees that the formula of the indwelling of the Spirit of God in Jesus is capable of being taken in so low a sense as to destroy all claim of uniqueness for Jesus. He does not feel so well satisfied with it, therefore, as Hans Hinrich Wendt, for example, expresses himself as being. But he knows nothing better to say, and is willing to leave it at that, with the further acknowledgment that he feels himself face to face here with something of a mystery. Loofs is a Ritschlian of the extreme right wing, and in his sense of a mystery in the person of Christ, leaving him not quite satisfied with the definition of His person as a man in whom God uniquely dwells, we perceive the height of christological conception to which we may attain on Ritschlian presupposition.

What Ritschl himself thought of Christ it is rather difficult to determine; and his followers are not perfectly agreed in their detailed interpretation of it. He himself warns us not to suppose him to be unaware of mysteries because he does not speak of them: it is precisely of the mysteries, he says, that he wishes to preserve silence. Meanwhile he is silent of all that is transcendental in Christ, His pre-existence, His metaphysical Godhead, His exaltation — if these things indeed belong to Christ. If Jesus had any transcendent Being other than His phenomenal Being as man, Ritschl says nothing about it. He seems, indeed, to leave no place for it. He speaks, no doubt, of the "Godhead" of Christ; but by this he means neither to allow that Christ existed as God before He was man, nor to attribute a Divine nature to the historical Christ, nor to suggest that He has now been exalted to Divine glory. He means merely to express his sense that Christ has the value of God for us — that is to say, that we are conscious that we owe salvation to Him. The "Deity" thus predicated to Him, it is explained, is purely "ethical" and not "metaphysical," and, moreover, is transferable to His people so that His Church, viewed as the sphere of His influence, is as Divine as He is. It is the "calling" of Christ to be the founder of the Kingdom of God; and in fulfilling this "calling" He fulfils the eternal purpose of God for the world and mankind. And it is only because His personal will is thus one with the will of God that the predicate of Godhead belongs to Him. "Christ is God" with Ritschl — thus S. Faut sums up the matter — "so far as He is on the one side the executor, on the other the object of the Divine will." It all comes, we see, at the best, to the conception that Jesus is the unique Revealer of God and Mediator of Redemption; and it is in these ideas that the higher class of Ritschlian thinkers live and move and have their being. To them Jesus is indeed purely human — "mere man" if you will, though the adjective "mere" is objected to as belittling. On the other hand, however, he stands in a unique relation to God "as the embodiment of God's life in humanity, and the guarantor of its presence and power; in whom God verifies Himself to us as Father and Redeemer." There is indeed no metaphysical Sonship with the Father in question; Sonship is an ethico-religious idea when applied to Jesus. When we call Him Son, we do not mean to declare Him God in a metaphysical sense; we but indicate "His superior mission for humanity as representing and communicating the Father's life." By His "centrality for the whole human race, as the one perfect mediator of the Divine life," He is so identified with God that those who have seen Him may be said to have seen the Father also. Through Him and Him only indeed has the Father ever been seen; in Him alone is "manifested the Father's ideal of humanity and the Father's purpose of grace toward the sinful." Through Him alone have men or can men come to the knowledge of the Father and to true and full communion with Him. " He is the one supreme Revealer," and " not only utters the thought of God " — who thus speaks through Him — but "incarnates the life of God, which through Him communicates itself to mankind as a redeeming and renewing power."

It is thus, we say, that the highest class of Ritschlian thinkers conceive of Jesus. We must emphasize, however, the words "the highest class." For this sketch of their thought of Jesus goes fairly to the limit of what can be said of Christ's dignity on Ritschlian ground. It not only, of course, gives expression to views which would be deemed impossible by a Schultz, a Harnack, a Wendt, but it transcends also what a Kaftan, a Kattenbusch, a Loofs, a Bornemann might be willing to say. For the whole Ritschlian school Christ is not so much Himself God as the means by which God is made known to us, and the instrument through which we are brought to God — and it is therefore only that they are willing, in a modified sense, to call Him Divine. " The term Divinity, applied to Jesus, expresses at bottom " in Ritschl's usage, says a careful expositor of his thought, " nothing more than the absolute confidence of the believer in the redemptive power of the Saviour." "The Godhead of Christ, therefore," says Gottschick, " expresses the value which the historical reality of this personal life possesses, as the power that produces the new humanity of regenerate and reconciled children of God." It is common, indeed, for Ritschlians, like Herrmann, to repudiate altogether experience of the power of the exalted Christ, and to suspend everything on the impression made by "the historical Christ," — and often, like Otto Ritschl, they mediate this through the Church to such an extent that Jesus appears merely as the starting-point of a movement propagated through the years from man to man; and He may therefore, without fatal loss, be lost sight of altogether. The Ritschlian conception of Christ must take its place as merely another of the numerous forms which the Humanitarianism of our anti-supernaturalistic age manifests.

For the characterizing feature of recent theories of the person of Christ is that they are all humanitarian. The Kenotic theory, which tried to find a middle ground between the God-man and the merely-man Jesus, having passed out of sight, the field is held by pure Humanitarianism. The situation is very clearly revealed in the classification of the possible Christological "schematizations" which Otto Kirn gives us in his "Elements of Evangelical Dogmatics." There are only four varieties of Christology, he tells us, which we need bear in mind as we pass our eye down the labours in this field of all the Christian centuries. These are, in his nomenclature, the Trinitarian, the Kenotic, the Messianic, and the Prophetic Christologies. The former two — the Trinitarian and the Kenotic — allow for a God-man; the first in fact, the second in theory. They are theories of the past. Only the Messianic and the Prophetic are living theories of to-day; and both of these give us merely a man Jesus. They differ only in one respect. Whereas in the Messianic Christology no less than in the Prophetic, Jesus in His self-consciousness as well as in His essential nature belongs to humanity and to humanity only, He is yet held in the Messianic Christology to be God's absolute organ for carrying out His counsel of salvation, and to be endowed for His work by a communication of the Holy Spirit beyond measure, fitting Him for unity with God and constituting Him the head of the community of God. The Prophetic Christology, on the other hand, looks upon Him as merely a religious genius, who in reaction upon His environment has become the unrivalled model of piety and as such the supreme guide to humanity in the knowledge of God and in the religious life. We may conceive of Jesus as the God-endowed man, or as the God-discovering man. In the former case we may see in Him God reaching down to man, to do him good: in the latter man reaching up to God, seeking good. Between these two conceptions we may take our choice: beyond them self-styled "modern thought" will not let us go.

Whether this reduction of Jesus to the dimensions of a mere man marks the triumph of modern christological speculation, or its collapse, is another question. The reduction of Jesus to the dimensions of a mere man was a phase of thought concerning His person which required to be fully exploited. And in that sense a service has been done to Christian thinking by the richness and variety of modern humanitarian constructions. Surely by now every possible expedient has been tried. The result is not encouraging. To him who would fain think of Him as merely a man, Jesus Christ looms up in history as ever more and more a mystery; a greater mystery than the God-man who is discarded in His favour. Say that the union of God and man in one person is intrinsically an incomprehensive mystery. It is nevertheless a mystery which, if it cannot be itself explained, yet explains. Without it, everything else is an incomprehensible mystery: the whole developing history of the kingdom of God, the gospel-record, the great figure of Paul and his great christological conceptions, the rise and growth and marvellous power of nascent Christianity, the history of Christianity in the world, the history of the world itself for two thousand years — your regenerated life and mine, our changed hearts and lives, our assurance of salvation, our deathless hope of eternal life. And yet we are invited to believe Him to have been a mere man, on no other ground than that it is easier to believe him to have been a mere man than a God-man! For that, after all, is what the whole ground of the assertion that Jesus was a mere man ultimately reduces to. It is intrinsically easier to believe in the existence of a mere man than in the existence of a God-man. But is it possible to believe that all that has issued from Jesus Christ could issue from a mere man? Apart from every other consideration, does there not lie in the effects wrought by Him an absolute bar to all humanitarian theories of His Person? The humanitarian interpretation of the Person of Christ is confronted by enormous historical and vital consequences, impossible of denial, which apparently spring from a fact which it pronounces inconceivable; though, apart from this fact, these consequences appear themselves to be impossible of explanation.

IX

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST

THE ESSENCE OF CHRISTIANITY AND THE CROSS OF CHRIST[1]

In a recent number of *The Harvard Theological Review*,[2] Professor Douglas Clyde Macintosh of the Yale Divinity School outlines in a very interesting manner the religious system to which he gives his adherence. For "substance of doctrine" (to use a form of speech formerly quite familiar at New Haven) this religious system does not differ markedly from what is usually taught in the circles of the so-called "Liberal Theology." Professor Macintosh has, however, his own way of construing and phrasing the common "Liberal" teaching; and his own way of construing and phrasing it presents a number of features which invite comment. It is tempting to turn aside to enumerate some of these, and perhaps to offer some remarks upon them. As we must make a selection, however, it seems best to confine ourselves to what appears on the face of it to be the most remarkable thing in Professor Macintosh's representations. This is his disposition to retain for his religious system the historical name of Christianity, although it utterly repudiates the cross of Christ, and in fact feels itself (in case of need) quite able to get along without even the person of Christ. A "new Christianity," he is willing, to be sure, to allow that it is — a "new Christianity for which the world is waiting"; and as such he is perhaps something more than willing to separate it from what he varyingly speaks of as "the older Christianity," "actual Christianity," "historic Christianity," "actual, historical Christianity." He strenuously claims for it, nevertheless, the right to call itself by the name of "Christianity."

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[1] From *The Harvard Theological Review*, vii. 1914, pp. 538–594.

[2] vii. 1, January, 1914, pp. 16–46.

It is, no doubt, a kind of tribute to Christianity — this clinging to its name to designate a religious system which retains so little of what that name has heretofore been used to express. Clearly, the name "Christianity" has become an honorable one under its old connotation, and has acquired secondary implications which do it credit. Mr. G. K. Chesterton has lately called our attention in his serio-comic way to the extent to which such secondary implications have attached themselves to it in the speech of the common people. The apple-women and charwomen, the draymen and dustmen, it seems, are accustomed to employ it in a sense of which we can only say that it lies somewhere between "sane" and "civilized"; which "signifies that which is human, normal, social, and self-respecting." "Where can I get Christian food?" "Where can I find a Christian bed?" These are natural forms of popular speech with which we are all familiar. And, adds Mr. Chesterton, when the modern idealist puts away wine and war and dons peasants' clothes in imitation of Tolstoy, and parts his hair in the middle as he has seen it parted in paintings of Christ, the democracy will most likely pass its scornful judgment on him by simply demanding, "Why can't he dress like a Christian?" By some such immanent logic "Christianity" has apparently come to mean to Professor Macintosh, "rational," "ethical"; and we can observe him, when wishing to express his vigorous rejection of "a particular theory of redemption" — this "particular theory of redemption" being the Christian doctrine of the Atoning Sacrifice of Christ — merely declaring of it roundly that it is "not only not essential to Christianity, because contrary to reason, but moreover essentially unchristian because opposed to the principles of sound morality."[3]

We certainly feel no impulse to deny that whatever is Christian is rational and moral. And we are profoundly interested in such indications as are supplied by the form of Professor Macintosh's declaration, that the general mind has been so thoroughly imbued with this fact that men instinctively reason on the subaudition that when we say, "Christian," we say "rational," "moral." But surely it cannot be necessary to point out that we may not determine the contents of a historical system after this fashion. Shall we deal so with Buddhism or Mohammedanism or Mormonism, with Romanism or Calvinism or the new "Liberalism"? If we find doctrines taught by these systems repugnant to reason and morality, we (so far) reject these systems. We do not forthwith declare that these (alleged) irrational and immoral doctrines can therefore have no place in these systems. We can deal differently with Christianity only on the assumption that Christianity is through and through and in all its parts in complete accordance with right reason and sound morality. The assumption is, no doubt, accordant with fact. But we are not entitled to make it prior to examination. And the first step in this examination cannot be taken until the contents of Christianity have been ascertained.

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[3] P. 18. Cf. p. 35, where this judgment is repeated: "being irrational, it cannot be of the essence of Christianity"; not being "rigidly moral," "it must be pronounced essentially unchristian."

To argue that a doctrine is not Christian because it is not reasonable or moral, in a word, is to argue in a manifestly vicious circle. It is to confuse the historical question, What is Christianity? with the rational question, What is true? And it can result in nothing other than replacing historical Christianity by a "rational" system of our own, or, to phrase it in Mr. Chesterton's language, in "turning the Christians into a new sect, with new doctrines hitherto unknown to Christendom." Nietzsche, Mr. Chesterton reminds us, insisted that there never was but one Christian, and He was crucified; the improvement now offered, Mr. Chesterton hints, may consist in suggesting that perhaps even that single Christian was not a "Christian." Certainly, the "Christianity" which is constructed on the principle, not that it consists in the religion founded by Jesus Christ and practised ever since by His followers, taught of Him, but that it shall contain only what commends itself to our ideas of "reason" and accords with our ideas of "morality" runs a considerable risk of becoming a

Christianity which stands out of all relation to Christ and to whatever has heretofore passed for Christianity. It offers us, in point of fact, merely a Rationalistic system — taking the term in its broader historical and not in its narrow philosophical significance.

Clearly, Christianity being a historical religion, its content can be determined only on historical grounds. The matter scarcely requires arguing; and we may be permitted, perhaps, at this point to content ourselves with simply referring to the very lucid statement of its elements made by H. H. Wendt in the opening pages of his "System of Christian Doctrine," as also in an earlier pamphlet devoted to the subject. "The Christian religion," remarks Wendt with admirable point[4] —

> "is a historically given religion. We cannot by an ideal construction or by deduction from a general notion of religion, determine what constitutes its genuine essence. We must rather seek to determine this essence by such an objective historical examination as we should give it were we dealing with the determination of the essence of some other historical religion."

Again[5]:

> "In a scientific presentation of Christian doctrine, as we have already seen, one side of its criticism and positive justification must be directed to the proof that the doctrine presented is also genuinely Christian doctrine. How is this proof to be made? The recognition of the fact that Christianity is an entity which is historically given, and is not to be ideally constructed, is of fundamental importance for answering this question. . . . The question of the genuine Christianity of the Christian doctrine to be presented is, as a matter of principle, not to be confused with the question of the truth and the value of this doctrine. From our incidental conviction of the truth and indispensableness of Christianity there easily arises the assumption that a religious conception, if it is true and valuable, must also be genuinely Christian. But from the scientific standpoint it is self-evident that it must first be proved what conceptions are genuinely Christian, and only then the truth of these Christian

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[4] "Die Norm des echten Christentums," 1893, p. 3; cf. p. 23.

[5] "System der christlichen Lehre," i. 1906, pp. 23–24; cf. pp. 3 ff., 42 ff.

conceptions be tested. Even when a capacity for ever-advancing development is recognized for Christianity and for Christian doctrine, the question of the authentic Christianity of any conception presented as Christian remains at bottom a historical one. For the question of what constitutes the ground-type of Christianity and of Christian doctrine, by which it is to be determined whether anything can still pass as Christian or not, is just as certainly to be answered historically as, for example, the question of what belongs to the ground-type of the Buddhist religion and doctrine."

There is really no mystery about the matter. The process by which it is determined what is a truly Christian doctrine (something very different from what is a true Christian doctrine), or what the Christian religion really is, differs in principle in no respect from the process by which we determine what is an old Hellenic doctrine or what Ritschlism really teaches, what is the nature of Islam or what is the essence of the Pragmatic philosophy. In the very nature of the case such questions are purely historical and purely objective in their character, and the answers to them are not in the least advanced by any judgments we may pass upon the rationality or morality of the several doctrines or systems which come under our survey.

The justification which Professor Macintosh offers for permitting his subjective judgments of rationality and ethical value to intrude into the determination of the purely objective question of "What is Christianity?" he draws from a theory, which he very earnestly advocates, of the proper method of procedure in determining "the essence" of "any historical *quantum*." This theory might well have been derived, by the simple process of transferring it to historical quantities, from the metaphysical doctrine of "essence" propounded of late by our Pragmatic philosophers. Out of the general Pragmatic doctrine that "reality must be defined in terms of experience"[6] — or, as even more sharply expressed, that "reality is experience"[7] — these thinkers have evolved the notion that the "essence" of anything is not what it is, but what it is, not merely to but for me; not that which makes the thing precisely the thing it is, but that in the thing, whatever it may be, which I find needful for the realization of a purpose of my own. "The essence of a thing," says William James,[8] "is that one of its properties which is so *important for my interests* that, in comparison with it, I may neglect the rest." Applying this astonishing doctrine to historical entities, and especially to Christianity, which is the historical entity in which at the moment he is interested, Professor Macintosh feels able to argue that the essence of Christianity is not that in Christianity which makes it the particular thing which we call Christianity, but that in Christianity which he finds it desirable to preserve in constructing what he considers the ideal religion. Since the essence, as he tells us with the emphasis of italics, "is necessarily *what is essential for a purpose*," and the right purpose is, of course, the realization of the true ideal, the essence of the Christian religion is necessarily "that in the totality of the religious phenomena of Christianity which is a necessary factor in the realization of the true ideal for humanity, and of the true ideal for human religion in particular"; or, varying the language slightly without altering the sense, "whatever in actual phenomenal Christianity is necessary for the realization of the true ideal of human spiritual life in general and of human religion in particular."

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[6] John Dewey, "Studies in Logical Theory," p. x.

[7] F. C. S. Schiller, "Studies in Humanism," p. 463.

The odd thing is that Professor Macintosh does not betray any consciousness of the outstanding fact that, in the process of his reasoning, he has transmuted the question which he started out to discuss, namely, What is essential to the retention of Christianity? into the fundamentally different one, in which he is himself perhaps more deeply interested, of What in Christianity is it essential that we retain?—namely in order that we may build up "the ideal religion." Unless we judge it to be still odder that he does not seem to have considered what would be the effect of the application of this method of determining the essence of a religious system to other religions besides Christianity — although he expressly presents it broadly as the proper method of determining "the essence of the Christian religion, or, for that matter, the essence of any historical *quantum*." If the discovery "in the totality of the religious phenomena of Christianity" of something which we judge "necessary for the realization of the true ideal of human spiritual life in general and of human religion in particular" justifies our calling that particular thing the "essence of Christianity" and ourselves, on the strength of our retention of it, "Christians"; would not the discovery of such an element in "the totality of the religious phenomena" of, say, Mormonism, equally justify us in declaring that element the "essence" of Mormonism and ourselves Mormons on the strength of our retention of it in our ideal religion? And surely we cannot doubt that Mormonism does possess in its composite system, however deeply buried beneath its own *bizarreries*, some truly religious and even some truly Christian elements — from which, indeed, we may believe, it derives whatever vitality it exhibits as a religious system; and certainly we cannot avoid retaining these elements as we build up our ideal religion. Or, if we seem to go too far afield in adducing Mormonism as an example, let us think for a moment of that active Christian sect known as the Seventh-Day Adventists. Undoubtedly, in the "totality of the religious phenomena" exhibited in the life of the members of this sect, there are many elements which must abide in any ideal system of religion. Do these elements therefore constitute the "essence" of Seventh-Day Adventism? And does our retention of them in our ideal construction justify our calling ourselves Seventh-Day Adventists?

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[8] "Text-Book of Psychology," 1892, p. 357; cf. "The Principles of Psychology, 1908," ii. p. 333.

It may not be an unpleasing thought to Professor Macintosh that, discerning something of value in each of the great religious movements which have stirred the waters of humanity, and preserving for the purposes of his ideal religion all that he sees in them of value, he may conceive himself to have therefore embraced "the essence" of each of them in turn, and to have thus acquired the right to claim for himself the name of every one of them. It may please him thus to think of himself as at once a Fetishist and a Shamanist, a Brahmanist and a Buddhist, a Confucian and a Mussulman, as well as a Jew and a Christian; perhaps also at once a Romanist and a Protestant, a Pelagian and an Augustinian, an Arminian and a Calvinist — for surely there is *something* of permanent value even in Calvinism, and if so, that is its " essence," and he who holds to the " essence " of Calvinism is surely a Calvinist. We have no wish to deny that Professor Macintosh's claim upon the one name may be as sound as upon another. But we confess to a doubt of the value of so diffused a claim upon names representing movements historically so distinct. And we confess to something more than a doubt of the validity of the method of determining " the essence " of historical entities which may lead to results so very embarrassing.

It must be admitted that the notion of " essence " has not always been dealt with lucidly by the metaphysicians. Cicero, indeed, who introduced the term into the Latin language, defined it very sensibly as " the whole of that by which a thing is, and is what it is " — a definition happily echoed in Locke's " the very being of anything, whereby it is what it is." And that essentially this remains the meaning of the term until today in general philosophical usage, we may be assured by Rudolf Eisler's definition of it. " Essence (*οὐσία*, *essentia*)," says he,[9] " is, ontologically speaking, that which constitutes the reality (Selbst-Sein) of a thing, its most proper, abiding nature, in distinction from its time-and-space-conditioned, changeable existence." Even an activist like the late Borden P. Bowne[10] without hesitation speaks in the same sense of " essence " as just " the nature of a thing ": " We believe that everything is what it is because of its nature, and that things differ because they have different natures. . . . The nature of a thing expresses the thing's real essence; and we hold that we have no true knowledge of the thing until we grasp its nature." To him, of course, as Being is just action, and a thing as conceived just a "conceived formula of action," the essence of a thing consists in a law "which gives both its coexistent and its sequent manifestations." But this concerns only his ontology. Under its guidance he writes:

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[9] " Wörterbuch der philosophischen Begriffe," ^{3} 1910, iii. p. 1774.

[10] " Metaphysics," 1882, pp. 59–60.

> "Now this rule or law which determines the form and sequence of a thing's activities, represents to our thought the nature of a thing, or expresses its true essence. It is in this law that the definiteness of a thing is to be found; and it is under this general form of a law determining the form and sequence of activity that we must think of the nature of the thing." "In the metaphysical sense, the nature of a thing is that law of activity whereby it is not merely a member of a class, but also, and primarily, itself in distinction from all other things." "When then we speak of the nature of a thing under the form of a law, we regard this law as entirely specific and individual and not as universal. The nature has the form of a law but applies only to the single case."

In one word, to Bowne too, the "essence" means just the specific quality of a thing.

Nevertheless already a half-century ago James McCosh could write of "essence": "It is a very mystical word, and a whole aggregate of foolish speculation has clustered round it."[11] He had perhaps been reading the section on "essence" in Hegel's "Phaenomenologie," without the assistance of William Wallace. "Still," he adds hopefully, "it may have a meaning." Whether he could have spoken so hopefully, had he had the discussions of our Twentieth-century Pragmatists before him, we can only conjecture. Certainly they have done what they could to confuse the matter, and it may be a fair question whether under their definitions the term "essence" retains any meaning at all. What is called its "essence" certainly ceases to have any significance for the object whose "essence" it is said to be; and, being transmuted into merely whatever the changing observer in his changing moods may find from time to time in an object utilizable for his varying purposes, has whatever significance it may retain rather for him than for it. We observe in the mean time that the Pragmatists have great difficulty in carrying their discussions of "essence" through consistently on these lines. The real meaning of the term is continually making itself felt, and advertising to the reader the artificiality of the construction which is being commended to him.

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[11] "The Intuitions of the Mind,"^{2} 1869, p. 152.

William James's discussion is particularly instructive in this respect.[12] Every object, he explains, has an indefinite number of attributes. But we, being finite, cannot attend to all these attributes at once. We must, by the necessity of the case, make a selection. And we shall inevitably make our selection according to our interests. The attribute to which we attend under the influence of an interest at the moment governing our attention, is not more "essential" to the object than any other attribute to which another observer, led by another interest, or ourselves at another time, governed by another interest, may attend. The object "is really *all* that it is" — a statement which seems to assure us that the essence of an object is "really" all that by virtue of which it is what it is, and that is very much the old definition of "essence." But *we* must "attack it piecemeal, ignoring the solid fulness in which the elements of Nature exist, and stringing one after another of them together in a serial way, to suit our little interests as they change from hour to hour." Thus the "essence" of the object may seem to us to be a different attribute at each successive moment. And that leads James to declare with the emphasis of underscoring: "*There is no property* ABSOLUTELY *essential to any one thing.* The same property which figures as the essence of a thing on one occasion becomes a very unessential feature upon another." This, however, can only mean that there is no single property among the many which belong to the object "really" which is "absolutely," that is to say, always and in every contingency, essential — to us, for our interests and purposes. Our interests change, and with the change of interest the quality of the object to which we attend also changes. This is not to say, of course, that there are no properties of an object which are absolutely, that is indispensably, essential — to it, that is to say to the preservation of its integrity as the very thing that it is. That this cannot be said is already made plain when it is declared that the object "is really all that it is." That little word "really" has confounded all of James's reasoning. And so he proceeds to tell us that "the elements of Nature exist" "in solid fulness"; and that it is only our partial, piecemeal dealing with them that hides this fact from us from time to time. Things, then, have "really" a "solid fulness" of properties by virtue of which they are objectively what they are; and this fact cannot be altered, though it may be obscured, by our habit — it may be a necessary habit — of attending to this "solid fulness" of elements one by one, and emphasizing each as it may meet a transient (or permanent) interest of our own. What things "really" are — that is what is essential *to them;* what in them meets an interest of ours (transient or permanent) — that is what we find essential *for our* (transient or permanent) purposes.

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[12] "The Principles of Psychology," 1908, ii. pp. 332 ff.

It is quite proper for James to say, therefore, that those properties which we are accustomed to select out of an object in accordance with "our usual purpose," "characterize us more than they characterize the thing." They are, no doubt, properties of the thing, and so far characterize it. But they need not be the particular properties of the thing which are most characteristic of it and form its specific quality. They are only the particular qualities of the thing by virtue of which it is most usually serviceable for us, and which therefore most constantly attract our attention. It is not implied, therefore, that there are no qualities which particularly characterize the thing, make it the thing it is, and so constitute its "essence." It is only recognized that we do not always, or commonly, select these properties for contemplation. When we are making selections of properties in accordance with our interests, we rather commonly, or always, select elements in the object which, because they are essential to *our* purposes, characterize *us* rather than the object. It is passing strange, therefore, that James should now go on to define the "essence *of a thing*," as "that one of its properties which is so *important for my interests* that in comparison with it I may neglect the rest." This, he has told us, is not "really" "the *essence* of the thing"; *that* lies elsewhere, and *this* is only the element in the thing which is essential *to my purpose* — which surely is a very different matter; unless, indeed, our particular purpose at the moment happens to be to determine what the "essence of the thing" is, in which case we may perhaps select out the particular properties which, constituting the essence of the thing, meet also our present purpose.

It is, of course, the Pragmatic point of view which, intruding here so many years before its formal announcement, forces this logical saltation upon James. From this point of view, he despises all questions of "inner essence"[13] as mere hair-splitting abstractions, and insists that "we carve out everything" "to suit our human purposes."[14] Accordingly he suddenly asserts here, without any justification in the preceding discussion, that "the only meaning of essence is teleological." A thing *is* just what it is good for, and, let us add, just what it is good for to me — and now. He has given us no reason, however, to believe that this is the case. He has only given us reason to believe that our interest in things is apt to be focussed on whatever we find serviceable to us, for the moment or permanently. That this is not all that the things are, however, he tells us himself, when he tells us not only that "the properties which are important vary from man to man and from hour to hour" in accordance with the purposes which dominate observation, but in express words that "the reality overflows these purposes at every pore." Surely it cannot be pretended that the properties which constitute the "concrete fact" "vary from man to man and from hour to hour," and are never more than what meets our purposes, which the reality that they constitute "overflows at every pore." And surely it is legitimate to inquire what then these properties are which enter into and constitute this "concrete fact," from the richness of which men may select what suits their purposes from time to time, but which in its richness " overflows " these purposes "at every pore." On the face of it this is the problem of " the essence " of the " concrete fact " in question.

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[13] Cf. "Pragmatism," 1907, p. 107.

[14] "Pragmatism," pp. 251 ff.

Except that it seems to show a somewhat more formal respect for objectivity, F. C. S. Schiller's definition of "essence " [15] does not differ essentially from James's. He speaks, of course, from his activistic standpoint, to which " the activity is the substance; a thing *is* only in so far as it is active." " So it is the activity," he explains, " which *makes* both the 'essence' and the 'accidents,' both of which are as it were 'precipitated' from the same process of active functioning." "The 'essence,'" therefore, he proceeds, "is merely such aspects of the whole behavior as are selected from among the rest by reason either of their relative permanence or of their importance for our purposes." He is recognizing nothing but activities. Some of these " activities " are " relatively " more permanent than others. Some of them are more important for us than others. We are to call either the one or the other of these sets of " activities " the " essence " of the object under consideration. Which? The former give us an objective criterion; the latter, a subjective one. Both are activities; but the latter only are conceived Pragmatically. If the latter be employed as our criterion, we are fully on William James's ground. If the former, we seem to be as fully off of it; we seem to be allowing that the " essence " of a thing is what makes it persistently (at least " relatively ") the thing that it is, not what we discover in it serviceable to us — which is what we shall have if the latter criterion be employed.

How the two criteria — objective and subjective — can be conciliated, does not appear. Schiller does indeed tell us that they "are, of course, convergent." And he explains this by remarking that " a permanent aspect is naturally one which it is important for us to take into account, while an important aspect is naturally one which we try to render permanent." We shall have to take his word for both declaration and explanation. An aspect taken into account because it is permanent is surely one selected on grounds relative to the object; it tells us what the object itself is, or, if we prefer that mode of statement, how the object itself behaves. And an aspect taken into account because it is important for us (we assume that it is not significant that the "for us" has dropped out of the second clause) is one selected on grounds relative to us, to "our purposes"; it tells us what we find in the object (or its behavior) which is serviceable to us. How these two criteria can be said to "converge" passes our comprehension — unless indeed we are to think circularly as well as activistically, and conceive that motions in diametrically opposite directions will meet — on the other side of the circle. It must be admitted that Schiller's statement is not free from suggestions of such a circular movement. If an aspect of the behavior of an object under our contemplation is to be held "important for us" because it is permanent, one would think that its observed permanence would precede our interest and determine it; and that, in such a case, we could scarcely say that the "essence" of the object, identified with this permanent aspect of its behavior, is determined by our interest. And yet we are immediately told that we can render permanent an aspect of the behavior of such an object in which we chance to be interested; or at least that we may try to do so, presumably hopefully. One would like to know how he is to go about trying to make permanent an aspect of the behavior of an object under his observation; and if we can render an aspect of it permanent because it is important for us that it should be so, why cannot we create this aspect for ourselves in the first instance, that it may serve our purposes?

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[15] " Humanism " (1903),^{2} 1912, p. 225.

We may take it that Schiller's disjunctive is merely another illustration of the difficulty of carrying out the programme of the subjectivation of the "essence," and that it therefore bears witness only to the fact that the "essence" of an object cannot really be conceived merely as that in it which is essential for me — which is of importance for my purposes — but will continue to present itself as that in the object which is essential for it — which is necessary to its integrity, to its remaining the precise thing it is. That is to say, those aspects of the whole behavior of an object which are permanent constitute its "essence," and that quite independently of their "importance for us." It is important, of course, that we should take cognizance of them and adjust our behavior to them, for they constitute reality, that actual environment upon which we react. Hardness, for example, does not enter into the essence of a stone-wall because it serves an interest of ours and can be made serviceable to us. It enters into its essence because it is "there," quite independently of its serving an interest of ours; and it is important for us to recognize that it is "there" because the recognition of realities serves interests of ours, and realities have a very unpleasant fashion of revenging themselves on those who do not recognize them. It is the hardness of the stone-wall which determines our interests, not our interests which determine its hardness; and it would be very difficult to understand how we should go about rendering its hardness permanent, because we found it important for us. We may discover many good reasons, on the other hand, why it would be well for us to render permanent our recognition that a stone-wall is hard. The assumption of an "external world" which ordinary experience makes, as Schiller himself allows, "works splendidly."[16]

It is upon some such flimsy philosophical basis that Professor Macintosh, transferring the matter to the sphere of historical entities, develops his method of determining the "essence" of historical movements. It must be allowed that, in applying to this new class of objects the principles laid down by the metaphysicians, he proceeds with a consistency which fairly puts the metaphysicians to the blush. He is seeking what he indifferently speaks of as a valid "definition," "the real nature," the "essence" of the Christian religion. In order to obtain this, he lays down with great firmness and with the emphasis of italics the general proposition that "the essence," that is, the essence of any "historical *quantum*," "is necessarily *what is essential for a purpose.*" The " unrelieved subjectivity " of this proposition is obvious, and he seeks to mitigate it, but only by insisting that " the controlling purpose " which is to determine the essence of an object "must be the right purpose in the given situation." He explains this to mean that it must be "the purpose to realize what under the circumstances is the true ideal." Thus we obtain what he regards as two "normative principles" which it is necessary to observe in extracting " the essence" from any historical entity. They are: " in the first place, the essence must be in the total actuality"; " and in the second place, the controlling purpose must be the right purpose." "In short," we read (again in the emphasis of italics), *" the essence is whatever is both present in the actual and demanded by the ideal."*

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[16] "Studies in Humanism," p. 459.

Why the essence of any historical entity must be something found not only in it but also in our ideal, is not made clear to us, and we profess ourselves unable to divine. We appear only to be given a formula by means of which we may get rid of the historical entity and substitute for it our own ideal; we are to recognize as the essence of the historical entity nothing that we do not find in our ideal. Shall Protestant investigators then declare that the essence of Romanism must be identified with what is common to Romanism and their ideals? Or Rationalistic investigators declare that the essence of Protestantism is what is common to Protestantism and their ideals? In that case Romanism is merely defined as really Protestantism, and Protestantism as really Rationalism. The matter is not relieved by the expedient taken to guard against error. " To guarantee that what is taken as essential is the real essence," we read, " what is taken as the ideal must be the true ideal." What is to guarantee that what is taken as the ideal is the true ideal, we are not told here, but afterwards it is intimated that " what this true ideal is, must be determined by a critical philosophy of values," which leaves us in great concern to know whose " critical philosophy of values" is to have this decisive function committed to it.

A third normative principle is now, however, invoked.

What is under these rules extracted as the essence of any historical entity must, we are told, "be able to maintain itself after it has been selected and separated from all that is unessential" — that is, we infer, from all that to the investigator seeking the " true ideal " seems harmful to that ideal. Accordingly, " in addition to being the highest common factor of the actual and the ideal, *the essence must be vital enough to persist in separation from all that must be eliminated.*" "The essence of the actual, then" — we reach now the final summing up — " is that element in the actual whose continued existence is demanded by the true ideal, and which can retain its actuality and vitality after the elimination of all objectionable elements from the actual at the demand of that same ideal."

The process of extracting the essence of any historical entity which is commended to us by Professor Macintosh is now before us. It is in brief the following. First, by "a critical philosophy of values," determine independently for yourself what is the true ideal. Next, go to the historical entity in question with this " true ideal " in your hand, and select from this historical entity whatever seems to you fitted to promote the "true ideal." This is "the essence" of that historical entity — provided only that when you discard all in it which is not in your judgment fitted to promote your " true ideal," enough is left to call the essence of anything. If not enough is left, then say that that entity has no " good essence " and discard it *in toto*. Clearly, in this process, the historical entity is nothing; our ideal is everything. We have simply sunk the historical entity in our ideal; and it almost has the look of a concession that it is still allowed that what is called its essence shall actually be found in the historical entity.

Applying this method of extracting the essence of historical entities to the Christian religion, Professor Macintosh has naturally no difficulty in moulding Christianity to his own taste. He tells us that the result reached is that " the Christian religion " must be in essence whatever in actual phenomenal Christianity is necessary for the realization of the true ideal of human spiritual life in general and of human religion in particular." Obviously, then, the contents of "the Christian religion" are not determined by the contents of "actual phenomenal Christianity" — and by this must be understood not merely the Christianity which happens to be actual at any one moment, but any and all Christianity which has ever been actual in the course of its entire history — but by the contents of "the true ideal of human spiritual life in general and of human religion in particular." The "true ideal" of religion — that is, of course, the investigator's ideal of what religion ought to be, determined, no doubt, by his "critical philosophy of values" — is thus simply substituted for Christianity, and given its name. The only connection which this ideal can claim with "actual phenomenal Christianity" — that is, any Christianity which has ever actually existed — will be dependent on the presence in "actual phenomenal Christianity" of elements which are in harmony with it and may, therefore, be preserved. Whatever in "actual phenomenal Christianity" agrees with "the true ideal" of religion is preserved; the rest is discarded; and the total ideal religion, — inclusive, of course, of the elements thus "taken over" from "actual phenomenal religion" because already present in the ideal religion, and also, of course, of all else that is contained in the ideal religion which was not present in "actual phenomenal Christianity," — recieves the name of "the Christian religion." The process is exceedingly simple. "Our religion" is certainly Christianity, because *real* Christianity is, of course, just "our religion." Everything else in "actual phenomenal Christianity" is to be discarded because it is not included in "our religion."

The particular religion to which, under the name of "the ideal religion," Professor Macintosh reduces Christianity by this process, proves, as has been already intimated, to be indistinguishable from that which is generally professed in the circles of so-called "Liberal Christianity." How he arrives at the conviction that this is "the ideal religion" and therefore essential Christianity, he does not fully explain to us. It emerges as such in his pages as the culmination of an exposition of the fundamentally moral character of Christianity as he conceives it — a moral character attributed to his "Christianity" because it is an element "common to actual Christianity and to ideal religion." If we understand Professor Macintosh at this point, he defines Christianity on this ground as the "religion of moral redemption," and then distinguishes it from other religions of moral redemption by the particular quality of the morality of which the redemption wrought by it consists. Christianity, he says, "is the religion whose 'miracle' or 'revelation' consists in the experience of *moral* 'salvation' or 'redemption.'"[17] To the objection that "a moral element is to be found in other historical religions also," he seems to reply that this need not invalidate the claim of Christianity to be the moral religion by way of eminence — if, that is, the quality of the morality brought by it to its votaries may be shown to be superior to that offered by other moral religions. This he affirms to be the fact, and he fixes on the term "Christlike" to express the specific quality of specifically Christian morality. Accumulating emphasis upon this quality he declares, then, that "Christianity is the religion of deliverance from unchristlikeness to a Christlike morality, through a Christlike attitude towards a Christlike superhuman reality." Repeating this with further elaboration, he declares again: "There is good ground to suppose, then, we take it, that redemption from unchristlikeness to a Christlike morality and ultimately to a Christlike fellowship with God, accomplished in the life of men by the activity of the Christlike God in response to a Christlike dependence and filial attitude on the part of the individual, is the essence of the Christian religion."

It is important to observe that these statements contain much more than was prepared for by the preceding argument. We have travelled very rapidly and very far and have arrived very unexpectedly at a very definite dogmatic result. Not only is the character of the morality involved in the Christian "redemption" defined as "Christlike" without sufficient justification or even explanation, so that we get a particular standard of morality, and one, be it observed, quite external to the subjects of religion, and wholly dependent on the truth of history for its validity and its very meaning. But we also have a particular manner — and that a very astonishing manner — in which the moral revolution asserted to take place in the subjects of the Christian religion, is wrought, made, without any, we do not say merely justification, but preparation in the preceding discussion, a part of the definition of that religion. It is wrought, we are now suddenly told, "through a Christlike attitude towards a Christlike superhuman reality"; "by the activity of the Christlike God in response to a Christlike dependence and filial attitude on the part of the individual." The essence of the Christian religion is thus made to consist not merely in the fact that it brings a moral redemption, and not merely in the specific character of the morality which it brings, but still further in the particular manner in which this moral redemption is produced. We do not stop now to press the question of what is involved with respect to the relation of Christianity to the historic Christ in the definition of this morality — and everything else significantly Christian — as "Christlike." We merely ask the warrant for the particular manner in which the moral revolution which is declared to be the essence of Christianity is asserted to be accomplished. Professor Macintosh gives us none. At a later point, it is true, we are told that this is involved in "the essence of the Christian gospel," and that this is derived from "the religious example of Jesus." "The Christian evangel," we read, "is the gospel of the power of God manifesting itself in a Christlike morality on condition of the cultivation of a life of Christlike religious devotion. It is the gospel of the universal possibility of redemption as a human religious experience, through following the religious example of Jesus, taking the attitude of sonship towards the 'God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.'" We have difficulty, however, in accepting mere repetition as justification. And we observe that Professor Macintosh can only profess in any case to be "practically certain" that the attitude here declared to be of the essence of Christianity on the ground that it was the attitude of Jesus, was really "the religious attitude of Jesus"; and indeed contends strenuously that it is not absolutely necessary for the validation of his "Christianity," thus made to hang entirely on the example of Jesus, that there ever should have been any Jesus to set this example. Nor have we discovered any reason given by him justifying the belief that if there was a Jesus and this was His attitude to God, it is capable of being imitated by us; or indeed whether, if it were imitable by us, it would have the effects asserted for it. The upshot of it all is merely that it is dogmatically declared to us, with no reasons rendered, that the ordinary "Liberal" construction of Christianity is the only true Christianity, and its fundamental postulates constitute "the essence of Christianity." On the face of it this declaration rests on nothing more solid than that the ordinary "Liberal" construction of Christianity seems to Professor Macintosh the "ideal religion," and it pleases him to call what he thinks the "ideal religion," "Christianity."

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[17] The echoes of Rudolf Eucken's language may be noted, but we do not stop to advert to the matter.

Even Adolf Harnack did better than that. It is quite true, as Alfred Loisy points out,[18] that Harnack does not speak really as a historian but as a dogmatician, in those brilliant lectures in which he advocates his personal religious opinions[19] under the name of "the essence of Christianity," and which, Ernst Troeltsch tells us,[20] have become "to a certain degree the Symbolical Book of all those who follow the historical tendency in theology." But he had at least the grace to profess to derive his idea of what Christianity is from historical Christianity, and his argument at least formally runs, that this and nothing else is the essence of the Christianity which was launched into the world by Jesus and has been lived by His followers. He tells us accordingly [21] that it is "a purely historical question" which he undertakes, and that therefore it is to be dealt with absolutely objectively; we are simply to ask what Christianity is without regard to what "position the individual who examines it may take up in regard to it, or whether in his own life he values it or not." His historical point of view is so marked, indeed, that he even declares that though we must start from "Jesus Christ and His Gospel," it is impossible to get "a complete answer to the question, What is Christianity?" "so long as we are restricted to Jesus Christ's teaching alone"; we must look upon Him merely as the root out of which the tree of Christianity has grown. "We cannot form any right estimate of the Christian religion unless we take our stand upon a comprehensive induction which shall cover all the facts of its history." "What is common to all the forms which it has taken, corrected by reference to the Gospel, and, conversely, the chief features of the Gospel, corrected by reference to history, will, we may be allowed to hope, bring us to the kernel of the matter."

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[18] "L'Évangile et l'Église,"^{3} 1904, pp. ix f.: "The definition of Christianity according to Harnack — is it that of a historian or only that of a theologian who takes in history what suits his theology? The theory which is expounded in the lectures on "The Essence of Christianity" is the same as that which dominates the learned "History of Dogmas" which the same author has published. But has he really deduced it from history, or has he rather only interpreted history according to the theory?"

[19] Loisy, p. v, justly calls the "Wesen des Christentums," "a profession of personal faith in the form of a historical sketch."

[20] *Die Christliche Welt,* xvii. (1903) 19, col. 444.

We could not easily have fairer historical professions. The pity is that Harnack's actual procedure corresponds so ill with them. He certainly does not approach his task in a purely historical spirit. He brings with him to the investigation of the teaching of Jesus, for example, a whole body of presuppositions, under the influence of which he forces his material into preconceived moulds. And he certainly does not derive his conception of Christianity from an induction from its entire phenomenal manifestation; he simply makes his reconstructed version of Jesus' Christianity the sole Christianity which he will recognize. Troeltsch [22] accordingly is compelled to pronounce Harnack's critics right when they declare that "his *Wesen* is no purely empirical-inductive work, but includes in it strong religio-philosophical preconceptions by which it is deeply influenced"; nor can he deny that Harnack treats the gospel of Jesus alone as the essence of Christianity and "works up the details of Jesus' preaching into an idea of Christianity, which he then merely illustrates from the later history of the Church, partly by pointing to departures from it, partly by emphasizing what is consonant with it in further developments."[23] What Harnack invites us to do is thus in point of fact merely to recognize as "the essence of Christianity" the "religion of Jesus" as he has reconstructed it under the influence of his own naturalistic postulates. Before we can follow him we must be assured that what he presents as such was really "the religion of Jesus," and that "the religion of Jesus," in his sense of that phrase, is really Christianity. We do not need to adopt Loisy's standpoint to perceive the justice of his criticisms at these points. And surely a remark like this cuts to the bottom:

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[21] "Das Wesen des Christentums," 1900, 56–60 thousand, 1908, Lect. 1. E. T. "What is Christianity?" 1901, pp. 7, 8, 10, 11, 15.

[22] As cited, 21, coll. 486 f.

> "If what is desired is to determine historically the essence of the gospel, the canons of a sound criticism do not permit us to resolve in advance to consider as unessential what we are now inclined to think uncertain or unacceptable. What is essential to the gospel of Jesus is what holds the first and the most considerable place in His authentic teaching, the ideas for which He strove and for which He died, not that merely which we believe to be still vital today. . . . In order to determine the essence of Islam we shall not take, in the teaching of the Prophet and in the Mussulman tradition, what we may consider true and fertile, but what was actually of most importance to Mahomet and his followers, in point of belief, ethics, and worship. Otherwise with a little good will we might discover that the essence of the Koran is the same as that of the Gospels — faith in the clement and merciful God."[24]

It is interesting and not uninstructive to observe in passing the diametrical opposition of the methods by which Harnack and Loisy, each, seek to extract the essence of Christianity. If Harnack, having reconstructed from the evangelical narratives a Jesus to fit his naturalistic presuppositions, sees in this reconstructed Jesus at once the entirety of Christianity and will allow nothing to enter into its essence but what he finds in Him, Loisy perceives in the Jesus to which he looks back through the stretches of history only the germ out of which his Christianity has expanded. It is Harnack, it is true, who writes:[25]

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[23] Cf. W. Sanday's remarks, "An Examination of Harnack's 'What is Christianity?'" 1901, pp. 16 ff.: "And yet in spite of these explicit promises the criterion that Harnack really proposes throughout his book is his own mutilated version of the teaching of Jesus."

[24] As cited, pp. xiv ff.

> "Just as we cannot obtain a complete knowledge of a tree without regarding not only its root and its stem but also its bark, its branches, and the way in which it blooms, so we cannot form any right estimate of the Christian religion unless we take our stand upon a comprehensive induction that shall cover all the facts of its history."

But it is not Harnack's but Loisy's method which this figure suggests. "Why," demands Loisy —[26]

> "Why ought the essence of the tree be thought to be contained in a single particle of the germ from which it has proceeded, and why will it not be just as truly and more perfectly realized in the tree as in the seed? Is the process of assimilation by which it makes its growth to be regarded as a change in the essence, virtually contained in the germ; or is it not rather the indispensable condition of its existence, of its preservation, of its advance in a life always the same and incessantly renewed?"

Harnack, he contends,[27]

> "does not conceive of Christianity as a seed which has grown — first a potential plant, then an actual plant, identical with itself from the beginning of its evolution to the present moment, and from its root to the tip of its trunk; but as a ripe, or rather, a decayed, nut which must be shelled if its incorruptible kernel is to be reached. And Harnack tears off the shell with so much perseverance that the question arises whether anything will remain at the end."

[25] As cited, p. 11.

[26] As cited, p. xxvi.

[27] As cited, pp. xxix, xxx.

Perhaps with a little idealization, we may represent to ourselves the fundamental ideas embodied in the divergent views as involving essentially some such conceptions as the following. Harnack wishes to see the essence of Christianity in what is constant in the entire history of the Church, and just on that account seeks it in the primitive beginnings of Christianity — in those primitive beginnings, no doubt, as reconstructed by him on the basis of his postulates. He therefore makes primitive Christianity, the Christianity of Jesus Himself (as he reconstructs it), the standard of all Christianity; that alone is Christianity which is to be found in the preaching of Jesus. Loisy wishes to view Christianity as a constant development, as finding its reality not in its germ but in its full growth. The gospel of Jesus is merely to him the root of the Church; the Church is the living development of the gospel; the essence of Christianity is its historical evolution, which in every part is the necessary outcome of the complex of circumstances in which it lives.[28]

When he lays aside figures and speaks plainly, Loisy, it is true, finds difficulty in maintaining himself at these high levels. At one point, indeed, he seems to work rather with the ordinary logical conception of "essence" in his mind, according to which "it denotes the common quality or qualities which are found in all the members of the class." [29] He makes in effect a genus of Christianity by cutting it up into periods; and, extracting the characteristic quality of each period in turn, he compares these together and concludes that what is common to all is the essence of Christianity and what is peculiar to each is the differentiation of each period.[30] No doubt there may be obtained thus a conception of what has persisted through all ages of Christian history; and this may, in a sense, be called "common Christianity." But what will be the result, if perchance Christianity has become apostate in any one age and has recovered itself ("come to itself" like the Prodigal Son) only after a period of general corruption? Obviously, at the best, such a method must confound "the essence of Christianity" with the minimum of Christianity, and presents no great advantage in this respect over that thoroughly misleading method of determining what is essential to Christianity, dear to the hearts of all "indifferentists," which seeks it in what is common to all those who in any age "profess and call themselves Christians" — extension through space taking here the place of Loisy's extension through time. What is common to all who call themselves Christians, whether as extended through time or space, is, of course, just the minimum of Christianity; otherwise those forms of professed Christianity or those periods of Christian history in which only the minimum of Christianity is or has been confessed would be excluded. The "essence of Christianity" and the minimum of Christianity are not, however, synonymous expressions. If choice were confined to these two, it would be better to follow Loisy in his ecclesiastical evolutionism and discover the essence of Christianity in the maximum of Christianity, in Christianity in its fullest growth and vigor.

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[28] Cf. Troeltsch, as cited, col. 445.

[29] McCosh, as cited, p. 152.

[30] As cited, p. xv: "If common traits have been conserved and developed from the origin until our day in the Church, these are the traits which constitute the essence of Christianity. At least the historian cannot recognize any others; he has no right to apply any other method than that which he applies to any other religion."

The evolutionism of Loisy is reproduced in Ernst Troeltsch, though of course with all the involved temperamental and environmental differences.[31] Troeltsch bids us[32] keep in mind that the conception involved in the phrase "the essence of Christianity" is historically inseparably wrapped up with the modern critical evolutionary point of view. The Romanist, he says, does not speak of "the essence of Christianity," but of the faith of the Church, and distinguishes only between the complete knowledge of that faith which is expected of the clergy and the less explicit knowledge of it which may be tolerated in the laity. Nor would old orthodox Protestantism have used the phrase. It would have said, " the revelation of the Bible," and have distinguished only between fundamental and non-fundamental articles. Even for the Enlightenment, the phrase would have had no significance. It spoke with Locke of "the reasonableness of Christianity" and rationalized the Bible, making the post-Apostolic Church responsible for all untenable dogmas. It is with Chateaubriand and his *Génie du Christianisme* that the notion first emerges into sight; that is to say, it is a product of Romanticism. And it is to the German Idealists and especially to the Hegelians that we owe its development. By it is not meant Christianity as a whole — this is external appearance — but that which unfolds itself in the phenomena of Christianity, "the idea and power" which has dominated Christianity through all its history and determined its varied phenomenal forms. It is "the internal spiritual unity" which binds all these phenomenal forms together and which can be reached only by a process of historical abstraction. Serving himself heir to the Hegelians (with the necessary corrections),[33] Troeltsch accordingly looks upon Christianity as, like other great coherent complexes of historical occurrences, the development of an idea which effloresces progressively, incorporating into itself and adapting to its uses all alien material which lies in its path. The isolation of this idea to thought is, in his view, the discovery of the essence of Christianity. The essence of Christianity is, therefore, an abstract notion by means of which the whole body of the phenomena which constitute Christian history is reduced to unity and explained.

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[31] Six articles entitled "Was heist 'Wesen des Christentums,'" published in *Die Christliche Welt*, xvii. (1903) Nos. 19, 21, 23, 25, 28, 29. These articles have been reprinted in Troeltsch's "Gesammelte Schriften," ii. 1913, pp. 386–451, but we cite from the articles.

[32] Col. 483.

It must not be imagined, however, that this wonderful informing idea which is to be distilled from phenomenal Christianity can, in the opinion of Troeltsch, " be simply abstracted from the whole course and the totality of the manifestations of Christianity in its historical development." A distinction, it is asserted, must be drawn between the phenomena which express the essence and those in which it is suppressed.[34] The historical forms must be subjected to a criticism according "to the ideal which informs the chief tendency."[35] This ideal may most conveniently be discovered, Troeltsch thinks, in the classical expression of Christianity in its origins.[36] But even there distinctions must be drawn. The primitive age must not be assumed to be a perfectly unitary complex. We must ask, What in the primitive age contains what is really classic? No doubt we shall find this in the figure and preaching of Jesus. But we must not forget that the figure and preaching of Jesus must be reconstructed. And for this reconstruction we need something more than the Synoptic Gospels. We need Paul and John, and more. "We do not find our foundation in the historical Christ, the Christ after the flesh, but in the spirit of Christ, which was disengaged by the destruction of the earthly manifestation in death."[37] The "words of Christ" are not Christianity; rather faith in Christ and the spirit which proceeds from this faith and operates in the community — this is Christianity. This spirit, however, did not exhaust its efficiency in the Pauline and Johannine Gospels; the totality of the Christian development is involved. In it elements continually present themselves, which were, no doubt, present in the primitive age, and in the light of the later development may be recognized as having been present in it, but which certainly only manifest themselves later and in particular circumstances. "We must recognize them as contained in the essence of Christianity and as important for the determination of that essence; we must look upon them as effects of the spirit of Christ: but we do not find them expressed in the primitive form in itself alone, and indeed cannot even directly attribute them to it."[38] So clear is it that we cannot derive the essence of Christianity exclusively from its primitive form; this essence "cannot be an unchangeable idea which is given once for all in the teaching of Jesus." Rather —

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[33] Col. 484.

[34] Col. 534.

> "the essence must be a somewhat which contains in itself energy and mobility, productive power of continuous reproduction. It can

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[35] Col. 534. [36] Col. 578–9. [37] Col. 580. [38] Col. 581.

certainly not be denoted by a word or a doctrine, but only by an idea which includes in itself from the first mobility and fulness of life; *it must be a self-developing spiritual principle,* a 'germinative principle' or a seed-thought, as Caird has it, a historical idea in Ranke's sense, that is, not a metaphysical or dogmatic conception, but a spiritual force which contains in itself a life-aim and a life-value, and which unfolds in its consistency and power of adaptation."[39]

The continuity — the unity binding the multiplicity of forms together — is, Troeltsch admits, no doubt, difficult to trace. It cannot lie simply in the preaching of Jesus, as persisting in all forms of Christianity as their basal element; nor yet in an abstract, generic idea common to all varieties of Christianity. It does not consist in any formulated conception, but in a spiritual power embracing in itself many ideas. Nor are we done with it when we are done with historical Christianity. In determining the essence of Christianity we must take in present Christianity as well as past Christianity; yes, and future Christianity too — if we believe in any future for Christianity. Thus from an abstraction, the essence of Christianity becomes an ideal.[40] We cannot avoid transforming it thus if we stand in any vital relation to Christianity. We study its history that we may learn from it. What we thus learn must be applied to the present, and must be projected also into the future. Thus the "divinatorial imagination" of abstraction necessarily passes into that "prognosticational imagination" which presages the further unfolding of the basal idea.

"Determination of essence is modification of essence. It is the extraction of the essential idea of Christianity from history in such a fashion that it shall illuminate the future; and at the same time a vital survey of the present and future world together in this light. The repeated determination of the essence is the repeated historical reorganization of Christianity. This can be avoided by none who seeks the essence of Christianity in a purely historical manner, and at the same time believes in the progressive power of the essence. Only those can take a different course who look upon

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[39] Col. 581. [40] Col. 651 f.

> Christianity as an outworn and transcended historical organism or who understands Christianity from an exclusively supernatural revelation in the Bible."[41]

This apparently means that Troeltsch is aware that in the process of extracting "the essence" of Christianity from its phenomenal manifestation, he is moulding it to his own ideals, and that he considers this natural to one in his position — one, that is, who looks upon Christianity as a growth and yet is concerned for its continuance in the world. We find him a little later, accordingly, speaking not merely of "the essential elements of Christianity" but rather of "the abiding and essential elements of Christianity." The notions of "abidingness" and "essentialness" have, however, in themselves nothing in common; and we only confuse ourselves, when we are seeking to discover the essence of Christianity, if we insist that what we find "essential" must be what we consider will be "abiding." We are here very near to employing the term "essential" again in the sense of "essential to us."

Troeltsch does not glose the essentially subjective character of the method of determining the essence of Christianity which he proposes, nor does he fail to perceive the danger which accompanies it of passing, without observing it, beyond the limits of Christianity into a new religion only loosely connected with Christianity.[42] These things, he says, simply must be recognized and faced. Then he continues: [43]

> "These remarks show our attitude towards one of the strongest assaults made of late years upon the Christianity of the essence of Christianity, as Harnack and his friends understand it. Eduard von Hartmann, who already somewhat earlier called the so-called Liberal theology the self-decomposition of Protestantism, will not permit the left-wing Ritschlians — therefore, above all, Harnack and those of like mind with him — to pass any longer as Christians. Their essence of Christianity is, he intimates, the abandonment of Christianity; and their Christianity is a self-deception due to their training and sentiment. What they maintain to be Christianity is their modern religious conviction, which has only a loose connec-

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[41] Col. 654.

[42] Col. 682.

[43] Coll. 682–3.

tion with the real spirit of Christianity, and which clings all the more anxiously to a few accidental historical supports. The proof which Hartmann offers of this view is as instructive for the whole question of the essence of Christianity as for the question of the maintenance of its continuity. For him, in a purely historical sense, the essence of Christianity lies in the conception of God-manhood; and he explains this conception in a Pantheistic sense of the unity of the Divine and human spirits; and declares it the great idea of Christianity, which only needs to be separated from the myth of the incarnation of God in Jesus, and to be freed from all theistic-personal traits in the idea of God, to be able to enrich the religion of the future. That means, however, very clearly that Hartmann too will recognize as essence only what has in his eyes a relatively abiding importance; with him too the essential is what is valuable for the future, as he understands it. But because this abiding element can obtain for him its full further significance only by elimination of essential conceptions of historical Christianity, the revelation-significance of Jesus and the personality of God, therefore Christianity, despite it, is for him in its entirety a transcended epoch, and those are already fallen out of the continuity of Christianity who do not make the conception of God-manhood central, but by giving it an externally historical connection with some words of Jesus persuade themselves that an ethical Deism, without significance either for itself or for the future, is the essence of Christianity."

The question raised here, says Troeltsch, cannot be argued; the difference lies in the point of view. But the reader will scarcely be able to agree that a mere strong counter-assertion on the part of Troeltsch and his friends that they know themselves to possess a better objective-historical conception of Christianity than Hartmann, and to preserve with it a personal religious continuity precisely in what is essential to it, is a sufficient refutation of Hartmann's strictures. Their "Christianity" is confessedly not the Christianity of the past; as Troeltsch elsewhere acknowledges,[44] it is not the vital Christianity of the present; and it can become the "Christianity " of the future (as he also allows) [45] only if Christianity may suffer a sea-change into something possibly richer, but assuredly exceedingly strange — and yet remain Christianity. Whether it can perform this feat is the real question of " the essence of Christianity " as expounded by Troeltsch.

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[44] "Die Bedeutung der Geschichtlichkeit Jesu für den Glauben," 1911; cf. *The Harvard Theological Review,* iv. (October, 1912), p. 459.

It is, of course, precisely Troeltsch's evolutionism which commends his presentation of " the essence " of Christianity to our evolution-obsessed generation. And a purer evolutionist than he, Edward Caird,[46] reminds us in more direct language that " evolution in human history includes revolution." If we are to distort (as Caird does) Tertullian's *anima naturaliter Christiana* into a prophetic pronouncement that what we call Christianity is the natural production of the human soul, as man struggles slowly towards the " consciousness of himself and of his relation to God," there is no reason why we should not understand that this so-called Christianity, as it reacts on its changing environment, takes on many forms and passes through many phases, connected only as the successive, though varying, expressions of the " growing idea of humanity." And there is no reason why these phases, as they succeed one another, should not advance by a zig-zag motion, which may often seem (and indeed be) retrogression, or should not sometimes even bring contiguous phases into a relation of direct opposition to one another; Caird tells us that the condition of development " is rebellion against the immediate past." Only, then, let it be distinctly understood, Christianity has lost all content. It is no longer a religion, but religion, finding its expression through varied forms: and the forms through which it finds its expression, whether of thought or of sentiment or of practice, are indifferent to it, so only the underlying religious impulse is there. It is only natural, therefore, that Jean Réville, for example, in endeavoring to tell us what " Liberal Protestantism " is — he might just as well have said

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[45] *Ibid.* Troeltsch speaks of the change which Christianity has passed through in the hands of those who think with him as a " transformation."

[46] Article, " Christianity and the Historical Christ," in *The New World,* VI. xxi. (March, 1897) p. 10.

"Liberal Christianity," he tells us himself — takes much this line.[47] It is not to be denied, of course, that there is a sense in which it may very properly be said that the essence of all religious movements is just religion. It is this primal instinct of human nature which gives its vitality to every form of religion from Fetishism up to — well, just short, let us say, of the religions of revelation, if it be allowed that there is such a thing as revelation. Here we have the thing which all religions have in common, and by virtue of which they live in the world. We may abstract everything else from each of them in turn, and, leaving to each only the pure religious impulse and its products, may plausibly maintain that in this we have "the essence" of every religion which has ever existed or which can ever exist. Only, in that case, it is clear, we must allow that there never has been and never will be at bottom more than one religion. The "essence" of Christianity, so conceived, and the "essence" of Fetishism are the same; and we may, on the ground of holding to its "essence" call ourselves with equal right by either name. In holding the "essence" of one, we hold the "essence" of all. It was under the influence of some such conception that the late Auguste Sabatier lost himself in rapture over what he seemed to himself to see, in the way of real unity in the midst of apparent diversity, in any average congregation of "Christian" worshippers. There is the aged woman who has no other conception of God than the white-bearded old man with eyes like coals of fire she has seen in the pictures in the big Bible on the parlor-table. And there is the young collegian imbued with a pure Deism by his philosophical course at the university. And there is the disciple of Kant who holds that all positive ideas of God are contradictory and who can allow of God only that He is the Unknowable. And there is the proud Hegelian who knows all about God, and knows Him to be the All. Moved by a common piety all these bow down together and adore. I do not know, says Sabatier, if there is a spectacle on earth which is more like heaven![48]

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[47] "Liberal Christianity," E. T. 1903, p. xi.; cf. p. 200: "The profession of faith of Liberal Protestantism — or of Liberal Christianity, for these two names are interchangeable — is wholly summed up in the single precept: *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul and thy neighbor as thyself.*" It does not trouble itself, however, as to who or what this God is which its 'single precept' requires it to love" (pp. 64, 76, 120, 194).

From such a standpoint, the cry Back to Christ! can have, as Caird does not fail to remind us, little meaning. The adjective "Christian" is employed to describe the movement which goes by this name only because that particular movement of religious development is supposed, in point of fact, to have taken its temporal beginning in Christ, or to have reached in the rise of Christianity a decisive — or at least an important — stage of its development, or merely perhaps to have received from Christ or from the rise of Christianity some impulse, more or less notable, the memory of which is preserved in the name by which it thus is accidentally designated. It is in any case an illusion to suppose that we can find in Christ "the true form" of the movement which is thus more or less loosely connected with His name; that would be, Caird suggests, "seeking the living among the dead."[49] If we speak of Him as the "seed" out of which the "plant" of Christianity has grown, we are merely using tropical language which very easily may be deceptive. We may imagine that "there is an implicit fulness in the seed which is not completely repeated in any subsequent stage in the life of the plant"; but then we must allow that this fulness in the seed is very "implicit" indeed; and we should not do amiss to bear in mind that "we can know what is in the germ only by seeing how it manifests itself in the plant." We must, in plain words, interpret Christ from Christianity, not Christianity from Christ. It strikes the reader with a sense of unreality, therefore, when writers like

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[48] "Discours sur l'évolution des dogmes," pp. 21–22; cf. the comment on it by H. Bois, "De la Connaissance Religieuse," 1894, pp. 35 ff. Also Jean Réville, "Liberal Christianity," E. T. pp. 61 ff.: "You may hold doctrines most dissimilar and even irreconcilable concerning the essence of God and God's government of the world, and yet be equally good and faithful disciples of Christ."

[49] Caird employs the phrase, not directly of the cry Back to Christ! but illustratively of the parallel cry, Back to Kant!

Troeltsch, committed to an evolutionary view of Christianity, are found laying great stress on primitive Christianity and particularly on the personality and teaching of Jesus. No sooner does Troeltsch establish the "classical" place of primitive Christianity and especially of Jesus for the interpretation of Christianity, to be sure, than he forthwith sets himself to unravelling the coil in which he has thus involved himself. We do not say he succeeds in unravelling it. But that only shows that his evolutionary conception of Christianity is not only inconsistent with the significance he has established for Jesus as not merely the germ out of which it has grown but its Founder; but, being inconsistent with it, is untenable. We can look upon the stress laid upon primitive Christianity, and on the person and teaching of Jesus, by writers of this class, in a word, only as concessions to undeniable fact; fatal concessions to a fact which, when fairly allowed for, refutes their entire point of view. Christianity, clearly, is not a natural evolution of the religious spirit of man, with a more or less accidental connection with the man Jesus; it is a particular religion instituted by Christ and given once for all its specific content by His authority.

The manner in which Troeltsch establishes the "classical" significance of "the person and preaching of Jesus" for the determination of the "essence" of Christianity, is meanwhile worth observing somewhat more closely on its own account. His acknowledgment of the universal recognition of "primitive Christianity and behind primitive Christianity the person and preaching of Jesus" as bearing this "classical" significance is itself a concession of the highest importance. He is, no doubt, dissatisfied with the manner in which the classical significance of primitive Christianity and the person and preaching of Jesus is ordinarily established, because of the involution in it of, as he explains, "the presuppositions of the popular antique supernaturalism" and because of the position of absolute authority in which it leaves primitive Christianity and Jesus. He desiderates, therefore, a new grounding for the acknowledged fact, a grounding which will invoke and issue in nothing which is unacceptable to "the purely human-historical conception." He explains:[50]

> "What is in question is a purely historically grounded significance of primitive Christianity for the determination of the essence. Such an one is, of course, actually at hand in the fullest sense, and is easy to point to. The authentic meaning of a historical phenomenon is contained most strongly and purely in its origins; and if such a statement can apply only in a qualified sense to complicated culture-forms like, say, the Renaissance, it certainly applies without qualification to the prophetic-ethical religions, which receive their entire life from the personalities of their founders, require their adherents constantly to renew their vitality from the primitive sources, and therefore connect their names and essence in the closest way with their personalities; it especially applies in an unqualified sense to Christianity, which prescribes to its adherents more rigidly than any other religion the continual nourishment of their religious life from contact with the Founder, and in its Christ-mysticism[51] has produced a unique phenomenon which corresponds with especial clearness with this circumstance. Accordingly, it is self-evident that the determination of the essence should adhere before all to the primitive period, and look upon it as the classical age."

We may look askance at some of the things that are said in this extract, but one thing emerges with great emphasis. Christianity certainly did not just "grow up"; it was founded. And subsequently to its founding, it has not "run wild," gone off in this or that direction according as some contentless "informing spirit" or "germinal life" within it may have chanced to lead it; it has been held strictly, more strictly than any other religious movement, to its fundamental type, by constant references back to its foundations. For whatever reason, on whatever ground, it has kept a constant check upon itself lest it should depart from type, and has shown an amazing power, after whatever aberrations, continually to return to type. Its eye has been fixed not merely in forward gaze but in backward as well. It has manifested a unique capacity of growth, justifying its Founder's comparison of it to the mustard-seed and to the leaven; but, after all is said as to the transformations it has suffered, its slacknesses, its degenerations, its failures, its growth has lain not in the gradual development of a content for itself, but in the steadily increasing assimilation of its environment to itself. In this respect too it has been like the mustard-seed and the leaven to which its Founder compared it; it has grown at the expense of its environment, not being moulded by it, but moulding it. It has accordingly remained amid its changing surroundings, and through all the forms which it has occasionally taken, essentially the same; and its "nature" is to be ascertained, therefore — like the "nature" of other stable entities — simply by looking at it. "Divinational imagination," and "prognostical imagination" are all very well in their place, and we have no wish to deny that there is a place for them even in estimating the meaning and movements of Christianity. But observation is the proper instrument for the ascertainment of the nature of stable entities, and in spite of the "varieties of Christianity" in time and in space, it will broadly suffice for the ascertainment of what Christianity is.

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[50] Col. 579.

[51] On this Christ-mysticism, cf. also J. Réville, as cited, p. 123.

It is clear then, and it may be taken as generally acknowledged, that Christianity is not merely a form which religion has spontaneously taken in the course of developing culture, but a specific religion which has been "founded," and the specific content of which has been once for all imposed upon it at its foundation. It is in the strictest sense of the terms, a "positive religion," a "historical religion"; and its content is to be ascertained not by reference to what we may think "the ideal religion," but by reference to the character given it by its Founder. This is the real meaning of a procedure like Harnack's, when, after proposing to determine the nature of Christianity from its total historical manifestation, he really seeks and finds it solely in what he has brought himself to look upon as "the religion of Jesus." His procedure here is not in itself wrong. His fault lies primarily in the critical method by which he ascertains the "religion of Jesus"; or, to speak more exactly, by which he imposes his own ideal of religion upon Jesus as "the religion of Jesus." Thus he is led to present as "the religion of Jesus" a religion which is as different as possible from the actual religion of Jesus, and the result of that is that he completely separates "the religion of Jesus" from the religion which He founded, and is compelled, therefore, to treat Christianity in its entire historical manifestation as a radical departure from "the religion of Jesus"; or, to put it brusquely, as a religion quite distinct from that which had been introduced into the world by Jesus, although it has usurped its place and name. In these circumstances, naturally, he could not fulfil his promise to present Christianity from "a comprehensive induction that should cover all the facts of its history." He could only present what he had determined to be "the religion of Jesus" as genuine Christianity, and illustrate from the subsequent history the greatness of its departure from the original type, and the occasional efforts which have been made to return more or less fully to it; perhaps also the abiding presence throughout its whole history of a persistent, if vague, apprehension that some such religion lay in the background, until at last at the end of the accumulating centuries, through great throes of labor, the "Liberal" theology has thrown off the superincumbent accretions and recovered the pure gospel; or, at least, recovered it in its essence; for the acknowledgment is inevitable that "the religion of Jesus" in its completeness, just as it lay in His own mind and heart, was His own, belonged to His time and circumstances, and cannot be brought back again, in its completeness, in our day. All we can do is to recover what in it is of "permanent validity."

In thus setting "the religion of Jesus" and historical Christianity over against one another in a relation which can be called nothing less than antipodal (whatever larger or smaller qualifications may be insisted upon) Harnack is speaking, of course, as the representative of the "Liberal" theology in general. It has become the traditional historical postulate of the "Liberal" construction of the early history of Christianity that the "religion of Jesus" was at once overlaid by the "faith of the primitive community," and this in turn by the dogmatic constructions of Paul. Thus Paul emerges to view as "the second founder" of Christianity, and the Christianity which has propagated itself through the ages is held to derive from him rather than from Jesus.[52] Two deep clefts — between Paul and the primitive community and between the primitive community and Jesus — are imagined to separate historical Christianity from the teaching of Jesus; and across these, we are told, we must somehow find our way if we are to recover the teaching of Jesus, as across them the teaching of Jesus would have had to find its way if it were to determine the development of historical Christianity. It is to this conception of the course of early Christian history that William Wrede gives perhaps somewhat extreme expression when he declares — we avail ourselves of Harnack's words here — that "the second gospel," that is, the teaching of Paul over against "the first gospel," that is, the teaching of Jesus, "is something entirely new, that it, as far as it contains what we call historical Christianity, presents a new religion, in which Jesus Christ Himself has no, or only a most remote, part, and that the Apostle Paul is the founder of this religion."[53] And it is from this point of sight that Wilhelm Bousset, for example, twits "the orthodox" with "basing the truth of their whole system and the form of their faith on a fantastic mythical-dogmatic interpretation of the life of Jesus by Paul."[54]

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[52] Cf. W. Wrede, "Paulus" (1904), E. T. 1907, pp. 179 ff.: "It follows then conclusively from all this that Paul is to be regarded as *the second founder of Christianity* . . . for Paul it demonstrably was who first . . . introduced into Christianity the ideas whose influence on its history up to the present time has been deepest and most wide-reaching. . . . This second founder of Christianity has even, compared with the first, exercised beyond all doubt the stronger — not the better — influence. . . . Throughout long stretches of church history . . . he has thrust the greater person, whom he meant only to serve, utterly into the background." Cf. pp. 165 f.: "The name 'disciple of Jesus' has little applicability to Paul, if it is used to denote a historical relation. . . . He stands much further away from Jesus than Jesus Himself stands from the noblest figures of Jewish piety."

[53] Harnack, "Aus Wissenschaft und Leben," ii. 1911, p. 216.

[54] Address on "The Significance of the Personality of Jesus Christ for

One great difficulty — certainly not the only one nor even the greatest one — which stands in the way of this reading of the course of primitive Christian history, arises from Paul's vigorous repudiation of the honor thrust upon him. He emphatically denies that he is the teacher of a new gospel[55] and explicitly represents himself as in his teaching but repeating the common gospel of Christ which had been taught from the beginning; and that especially in those very items in which he is declared to be most violently the innovator. To adduce but a single instance — that with which we are at the moment most immediately concerned — Paul, in the most natural way in the world and with a simplicity which confounds every effort to discredit it, declares that he did not invent but received from his predecessors in the teaching of Christ's gospel the great central fact — it is made the head and front of his offending — "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," that is to say, the Christian doctrine of atonement in the blood of Jesus.[56] We may believe, however, that it is rather the insuperable general difficulties which spring at once into sight when an attempt is made to construe Christianity as rather Paulinism — with its involved relegation of Jesus, as Wrede puts it, "utterly into the background" (though He is still inconsequently declared the greater person of the two) — which has caused this construction of primitive Christian history, long dallied with, to begin to crumble just

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Belief," printed in the *Proceedings and Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress*, 1911, p. 209.

[55] Cf. E. von Dobschütz, *TSK*, 85 (1912), p. 364: "Paul calls his preaching gospel, the gospel; in conflict with the Judaisers, he vigorously denies that there is any other gospel (Gal. i. 6., 2 Cor. xi. 4.); another gospel exists just as little as there exists another Jesus." But Wrede (as cited, p. 166) does not hesitate to say there was another Christ: "The being whose disciple and apostle he wished to be was not actually the historical man, Jesus, but another." This contention indeed lies at the very root of the theory expressed by the phrase "the double gospel" in the New Testament.

[56] Wrede can only say in a footnote (p. 112, E. T. p. 168), that "it requires a very literal interpretation of Paul's words to make out that what was delivered to him includes '*died for our sins*'" — a remark which is very naturally cited by von Dobschütz (p. 342, note) with a subaudition of derision.

so soon as it has been given clear and unvarnished statement and its logical consequences exhibited. It is not without its significance that a single recent number of a theological journal[57] contains side by side two articles in which the attempt is made to close up again the yawning gulf that has been opened by the speculations of the "Liberal" theology between Jesus and Paul. The circumstance that the two writers proceed to their common end by precisely opposite methods — the one by denying that Paul was a "Paulinist,"[58] and the other more reasonably by pointing out that Jesus was Himself very much of a "Paulinist"[59] — only exhibits the more clearly the precise nature of the difficulty which is created by attempting to set Paul in opposition to Jesus and emphasizes the more strongly the intolerableness of the situation induced.

We need not, however, go beyond Harnack himself to learn both the intolerableness and the untenableness of this construction of primitive Christian history. In an address delivered before the Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress, held at Berlin in the early days of August 1910, under the title of "The Double Gospel in the New Testament,"[60] Harnack as decisively as von Dobschütz repels the notion that Paul was the author of a new gospel, and shows as clearly as von Dobschütz that the germ of Paul's teaching is to be found also in that of Jesus, although he still rests rather more than von Dobschütz under the illusion that the gospel of Paul differs from that of Jesus in important particulars.[61] He therefore speaks of "a double gospel" lying side by side in the teaching of the New Testament writers, and indeed persisting side by side throughout the entire history of the Church. The problem of the origin of what he calls "the second gospel," that is, "the preaching that the Son of God descended from heaven, was known as man, through His death and resurrection brought to believers redemption from sin, death, and devil, and thus realized God's eternal counsel of salvation" — just "Paulinism" in the tradition of the "Liberal" theology — he carries back with complete confidence to the beginnings of the Christian community. He says:[62]

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[57] "Theologische Studien und Kritiken," 85 (1912), Heft 3.

[58] G. Kittel, "Jesus bei Paulus, *TSK*, 85 (1912), pp. 366–402. By a drastic criticism of the text followed up by an artificial exegesis, Kittel manages to deprive Paul of everything which would markedly separate him from the "Liberal" Jesus.

[59] E. von Dobschütz, "Gibt es ein doppeltes Evangelium in Neuen Testament?" pp. 331–366. Von Dobschütz's thesis is that "the contrast between Jesus and Paul, as it has been set forth by the newer theology, especially since the publication of the Volksbücher of Bousset and Wrede, is possible only when the Gospel of Jesus has been greatly reduced and, on the other side, the traits of the preaching of Paul which lead away from the Gospel of Jesus are strongly emphasized in a one-sided manner" (p. 346).

[60] "Aus Wissenschaft und Leben," ii. 1911, pp. 211–224 (E. T. in the *Proceedings and Papers of the Fifth International Congress of Free Christianity and Religious Progress*, 1911, pp. 97–107).

> "The declaration that Christ 'died for our sins according to the Scriptures' Paul calls a traditional, therefore a universal Christian article of belief of the first rank; and he says the same of the resurrection of Christ. It is accordingly certain that the original apostles and the Jerusalem community shared this belief and doctrine. This is also attested by the first chapters of the Book of Acts, the trustworthiness of which in this respect is incontestable. The problem must therefore be carried back chronologically from Paul to Jesus' first disciples. They already preached the atoning death (*Sühnetod*) and resurrection of Christ. If they preached them, however, they also of course recognized them as the principle articles, therefore as 'the gospel' in the gospel, and this is evident in point of fact in the oldest written Gospel which we possess, that is, in that of Mark. The whole work of Mark is so disposed and composed that death and resurrection appear as the aim of the entire presentation. Mark may certainly have been influenced by the Pauline preaching; but the same structure has been given to the Palestinian Gospel of Matthew too; it will not have been new then to the Palestinian Christians."

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[61] Therefore von Dobschütz (p. 364) notes: "I must accordingly, however, repel also Harnack's formula of the 'double gospel' which is found in the New Testament, however much I approve of its purpose to bring the apostolic preaching again to its rights. I think that Paul and the others would have one and all protested against it; they were not conscious of any difference and would have acknowledged none."

[62] Pp. 216 f. (E.T. p. 101).

If Harnack's eyes are still so far holden, that he does not yet see that what Paul found in the primitive disciples they in turn found in Jesus Himself, he is still able to go a certain distance towards the recognition of this great fact also. We find him saying: [63]

> "Jesus' proclamation comes so far into consideration here as He preached not only the necessity and actuality of forgiveness of sins, but undoubtedly placed His Person and His Work in relation to it. He not only laid claim to the power to forgive sins, but at the celebration of the Last Supper He brought His death into connection with the deliverance of souls. This may indeed be disputed, but this much is at any rate certain, that attachment to His Person, that is, discipleship, was His own provision. He, however, who attached himself to Him must have found and known Him as somehow 'the Way' to the Father and to all the benefits of the Kingdom ('Come unto me')."

Why these utterances of Harnack's should have aroused the wide-spread interest which they have is a little difficult to understand. Not only do they seem very much a matter of course — and Harnack himself reminds us that they have always been common property (not even Strauss, says he, disputed them, and Baur fully acknowledged them) [64] — but he had himself years ago set them in a clear light and partly in even more suggestive form, in his lectures on *What is Christianity*. "If we also consider," says he there,[65] "that Jesus Himself described his death as a service which he was rendering to many, and that by a solemn act he instituted a lasting memorial of it — I see no reason to doubt the fact — we can understand how this death and the shame of the cross were bound to take the central place." He even calls attention there to that very significant fact, that the death of Christ, being looked upon as a sacrifice — as it confessedly was by His very earliest disciples — "put an end to all blood-sacrifices" [66]; surely not (as Harnack inconsequently suggests) [67] because it showed that blood-sacrifices were in themselves meaningless (it was itself looked upon as a blood-sacrifice), but because (as is implied in Harnack's own words) this was to Jesus' followers the only true blood-sacrifice and left no room for any other. "This death," he is impelled himself to write,[68] "had the value of a sacrificial death; for otherwise it would not have possessed the power to penetrate into that inner world out of which blood-sacrifices have issued"— which surely is as much as to say, with the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, that it actually cleansed the consciences of men while other sacrifices did not avail to cleanse them, that it satisfied the demands of the uneasy consciences of those who were suffering under a sense of their guilt.

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[63] P. 218 (E. T. p. 103).
[64] "What is Christianity?" p. 156.
[65] P. 160.
[66] Pp. 156 ff.
[67] P. 158.

That there is something still lacking in these acknowledgments is of course true. Something of what is lacking is supplied by von Dobschütz's somewhat more hearty recognition of the saving value which Jesus Himself attached to His death.[69] That He looked upon His death, not as an untoward accident befalling Him or as a hard necessity breaking off His work but as an instrument for the accomplishment of His mission, von Dobschütz shows with sufficient solidity. And

> "We have still three declarations in which Jesus expresses Himself to His disciples — certainly only to them — with respect to the redemptive significance of His death, suggestively, figuratively, yet sufficiently distinctly; I mean the declaration about ministering and giving His life λύτρον ἀντὶ πολλῶν (Mk. x. 45), the declaration about the Body and Blood as symbols of the New Covenant (Mk. xiv. 24), and the declaration, transmitted to be sure only in the Fourth Gospel but certainly original, about the hazarding of His life in conflict with the adversary who menaces His people (Jno. x. 11); three varying figures, all of which come at last to the recognition by Jesus of His death as necessary for the completion of His work, viz., for uniting men again with God, by an expiation removing the guilt which separated them, overcoming the Evil One, estab-

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[68] P. 99 (German ed.; E. T. pp. 157 f.).

[69] Pp. 352 ff. Harnack is inclined to deny to Jesus the saying recorded in Mk. x. 45. Mt. xx. 28. especially its last clause ("Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche," 1912, xxii, p. 9); of von Dobschütz's three passages, he would allow therefore only one (Mk. xiv. 24.) to be direct evidence of Jesus' teaching.

lishing the indissoluble covenant relation predicted by the prophets. I can find no decisive reason for exscinding these three declarations from the genuine tradition of Jesus. What has been adduced against them proceeds from *a priori* presuppositions which seem to me unjustified, such as that Jesus could not foresee His death, to say nothing of predicting it. Neither His own dismay at Gethsemane, nor the conduct of the disciples; their flight and their despair, gives any justification to such a contention. They remain psychologically thoroughly intelligible, even with respect to the perception and salutariness of His death. And then these declarations are, so to say, necessary for explaining the fact that the Apostolical preaching from the beginning deals with the redemptive significance of Jesus' death as with a settled fact, while yet remaining entirely without clarity as to the 'how' and seeking after varying explanations, all of which, however, ultimately move in directions more intimated than inculcated by these declarations of the Lord."

In order to reach the truth we need only take one step more and frankly recognize that these declarations are central to Jesus' conception of His mission.[70] And this step we must take not less on account of the declarations themselves (Jesus says expressly that He "came" for the distinct purpose of "giving His life as a ransom for many" and with great explicitness declares the sacrificial character of His death) than on account of numerous other less direct but no less real references to the significance of His mission as redemptive, and in order that the whole subsequent historical development may not be rendered unintelligible (the very disposition of the matter of the Gospels is determined by this presupposition, and the whole preaching of the disciples turns on it as its hinge). No doubt Jesus is thus implicated in the presentation of Christianity as specifically a redemptive religion; "an appearance is created," to use Paul Wernle's phrase in an analogous connection, "that Jesus Himself is responsible for the momentous dogmatic development, and encumbered the simple, eternal will of God with a minimum of dogma and ecclesiasticism "[71]; an appearance, we may add, which is not deceptive, as Wernle would have us believe, and with an amount of " dogma " which cannot justly be called a " minimum." This is, however, only to permit Jesus to come to His rights in the matter of His teaching; and to allow Him to found the religion which He tells us He came to found, and not to insist on thrusting an essentially different one upon Him because we happen ourselves to like it better.[72] These declarations of Jesus as to the redemptive significance of His death cannot be denied to Him; their meaning cannot be eviscerated by studiously minimizing expositions,[73] and they cannot be deprived of their cardinal position in the religion which He founded.[74] In point of fact, Jesus announced His mission as not to the righteous but sinners; and what He offered to sinners was not mere exemption — or if even that word retains too much reminiscence of a price paid, say immunity — but specifically redemption.

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[70] Compare the discussion of the matter in *The Princeton Theological Review,* xi. 2 (April, 1913), pp. 259 ff.

In the mind of Jesus as truly as in the minds of His followers, the religion which He founded was by way of eminence the religion of redemption. Perhaps we could have no better evidence of this than the tenacity with which those who would fain retain the name of Christianity while yet repudiating its specific character, cling to the term " redemptive " also as descriptive of the nature of their new Christianity, identified by them with the religion of Jesus. Professor Macintosh, for example, wishes still to describe his new religion as " the religion of moral redemption "; though he discriminates the notion which the term connotes with him as its broad sense, as over against "the narrow sense" which it bears in its customary application to Christianity. By "redemption" he means, however, merely "reformation"; and these are not only the narrow and the broad of it; they are specifically different conceptions, and the employment of the two terms as synonyms cannot fail to mislead. For our part, we prefer the perhaps brutal but certainly more unambiguous frankness of William Wrede.[75] He conceives "the religion of Jesus" on the same lines as Professor Macintosh's "Christianity," and roundly denies on that very account that it can strictly be called a religion of redemption, contrasting it with Paul's precisely on this score. He does not deny that "redemption" may have a wider meaning also, according to which we "may say of all real religion that it is and intends to be redemptive." But he knows very well that "it is not of this general truth that we are thinking when we characterize particular religions as religions of redemption." And since in his view the emphasis in the religion of Jesus "falls on individual piety and its connection with future salvation," he remarks simply, that "no one who set out to describe the religion which lives in the sayings and similitudes of Jesus could hit by any chance on the phrase 'religion of redemption,'" while on the other hand, with respect to Paul, "everything . . . is said when we say that he made Christianity the religion of redemption." It tends to obscure the fact that a religion is being ascribed to Jesus which is not in the accepted ("narrow") sense of the word "redemptive," to characterize the religion which is ascribed to Him so emphatically as "redemptive" (in the "wider" sense of the word), especially when it lies on the face of the record that the religion which Jesus founded is a redemptive religion in the narrow sense, that is to say, has the Cross set in its centre.

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[71] " Die Anfänge unserer Religion," ^{2} 1904, p. 58.

[72] A very pleasantly written exposition of Jesus' relation to " the double gospel " may be found in Lic. theol. Martin Schulze's brochure, " Das Wesen des Christentums," 1897.

[73] We permit ourselves merely to refer here to the treatment of these by James Denney, " The Death of Christ," 1902, pp. 11–60. E. D. Burton's attempt to make " to give His life a ransom for many " mean to give His life, not His death (" Biblical Ideas of Atonement," 1909, pp. 113 ff.) surely requires no refutation.

[74] Cf. what Paul Feine says, " Theologie des Neuen Testaments," 1910, pp. 120 ff.

Its redemptive character has not, then, been imported into Christianity from without, in the course of its development in the world — whether through the instrumentality of Paul or of some other one. It has constituted its essence as a specific religion from the beginning; without which it would cease to be the religion that Jesus founded, and that, retaining the specific character impressed on it by Him, has borne His name through the centuries known from it as Christian. Precisely what Christianity was in the beginning, has ever been through all its history, and must continue to be so long as it keeps its specific character by virtue of which it is what it is, is a redemptive religion; or rather that particular redemptive religion which brings to man salvation from his sin, conceived as guilt as well as pollution, through the expiatory death of Jesus Christ.

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[75] Paulus, pp. 177 f.

So clear is this that even an observer who approaches the matter from a very general point of view, and seeks only, as a student of philosophy, to determine from the outstanding facts what the real nature of Christianity is, cannot miss it. Josiah Royce[76] asks himself "what is vital in Christianity?" using the term "vital" much in the sense which is ordinarily attached to the term "essential." "That is vital for an organic type," he explains, illustratively, "which is so characteristic of that type that, were such vital features changed, the type in question, if not altogether destroyed, would be changed into what is essentially another type." In seeking an answer, he naturally brings the "Liberal" and what he calls the "Traditional" answers into comparison. "Is Christianity essentially a religion of redemption," he inquires, "in the sense in which tradition defines redemption? Or is Christianity simply that religion of the love of God and the love of man which the sayings and the parables so richly illustrate?" For the former view, he notes, is pleaded "the whole authority, such as it is, of the needs and religious experience of the church of Christian history; the church early found, or at least felt, that it could not live at all without thus interpreting the person and work of Christ." For the latter is pleaded that "the doctrine in view seems to be, at least in the main, unknown to

[76] Essay III. in the volume, "William James and Other Essays on the Philosophy of Life," 1911.

the historic Christ, in so far as we can learn what he taught." Nevertheless he has no hesitation in rejecting the latter view, or in ascribing the former to Jesus. "As a student of philosophy, coming in no partisan spirit," he declares, "I must insist that this reduction of what is vital in Christianity to the so-called pure gospel of Christ, as he preached it and as it is recorded in the body of the presumably authentic sayings and parables, is profoundly unsatisfactory." The historic church was led to support the opposite view, he asserts, by "a sense of religious values which was a true sense." And despite what he (erroneously) believes to be the testimony of the records, he refuses to believe that the "Liberal" view can fully represent our Lord's own conception of His religion. He argues:

> "For one thing, Christ can hardly be supposed to have regarded his most authentically reported religious sayings as containing the whole of his message, or as embodying the whole of his mission. For, if he had so viewed the matter, the Messianic tragedy in which his life work culminated would have been needless and unintelligible. For the rest, the doctrine that he taught is, as it stands, essentially incomplete. It is not a rounded whole. It looks beyond itself for a completion, which the master himself unquestionably conceived in terms of the approaching end of the world, and which the church later conceived in terms of what has become indeed vital for Christianity."[77]

That one who does not profess to approach the question with which he deals "as an authority in matters which are technically theological," and who has accordingly been led astray by those upon whom he was compelled to depend for the statement of the facts — and whose own interpretation, we must add, of the significance of the conclusion that he reaches leaves so much to be desired — should yet have seen thus clearly, and been led to assert thus strongly, that Christianity is, in its essence, "a redemptive religion" and that "what is most vital in Christianity is contained in whatever is essential and permanent about the doctrines of the incarnation and the

[77] P. 141.

atonement," seems a notable testimony to the obviousness of the main facts. Had Royce understood that these elements in the Christian religion which he finds vital to it were not introduced into it by the followers of Christ in their interpretation of His religion, but were inserted into it as its very heart by the Master Himself, we may fancy with what increased emphasis he would have insisted upon them as the very essence of this religion.

Professor Macintosh tells us, to be sure, that if this is Christianity, "he would have to confess not only that he is not a Christian, but that he does not see how he ever could be a Christian." It is a sad confession, but by no means an unexampled one. Every Inquiry Room supplies its contingent of like instances, and Christianity had not grown very old before it discovered that the preaching of Christ crucified was unto the Jews a stumbling-block and unto the Greeks foolishness. The only novel feature in the present situation lies in the proposal that if one cannot or will not accept the Christianity of the crucified Son of God, we shall just call what he can or will accept "Christianity" and let it go at that. This may seem an easy adjustment; but it is attended with the inconvenience of transferring our interest from things to mere names. The thing which has hitherto been known as Christianity appears to remain the same, however we deal with the name by which it has hitherto been known. And that thing enshrines the Cross in its heart. Paul Feine does not in the least exaggerate when, in the opening words of the section in his "Theologie des Neuen Testaments"[78] which speaks of Jesus' own teaching as to His death, he writes:

> "It has been the belief and the teaching of the Christian Church of all ages and of all Confessions, that Jesus, the Son of God, in His sacrificial death on the cross wrought the reconciliation of men with God, and by His resurrection begot anew those who believe in Him unto a living hope of eternal life. This belief forms the content of the hymns and prayers of Christian devotion through all the centuries. It filled with new life the dying civilization of Greece and

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[78] P. 120.

Rome and conquered to Christianity the youthful forces of the Germanic stock. In the proclamation of Jesus the Divine Saviour who died for us on the Cross, still lies even today the secret of the successes of Christian missions among the heathen. The symbol of this belief greets us in the form of the Cross from the tower of every church, from every Christian grave-stone and in the thousands of forms in which the Cross finds employment in daily life; this belief meets us in the gospel of the great Christian festivals and in the two sacraments of the church."

Enough; there can be no doubt what Christianity has been up to today; and there can be no doubt that what it is now proposed to transfer the name to is an essentially different religion. Have we not had it for a generation past dinned into our ears that it is an essentially different religion? that precisely what Paul did, when he substituted "the religion about Jesus," that is, the religion of the Cross, for "the religion of Jesus," that is, the "Liberal" reconstruction of what Jesus Himself taught, was to introduce a new religion, a religion, to recall Wrede's characterization, more unlike the religion of Jesus than the religion of Jesus was unlike Judaism?[79]

It seems merely frivolous to declare in one and the same breath that Paul introduced an essentially new religion when he supplanted "the simple gospel of Jesus" with the religion of the Cross, and that this new religion of the Cross is not essentially deserted when a return is made from it to "the simple religion of Jesus." The two religions are, in point of fact, essentially different, and no attempt to confuse them under a common designation can permanently conceal this fact. He who looks to be perfected through his own assumption of what he calls a Christlike attitude towards what he calls a Christlike superhuman reality — though he considers that the term "Christlike" may without fatal loss be a merely conventional designation — is of a totally different religion from him who feels himself a sinner redeemed by the blood of a divine Saviour dying for him on the Cross. It may be, as

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[79] If Wrede be thought a mere extremist, let the words of Paul Wernle ("Anfänge,"^{2} 1904, p. 112; E. T. i. pp. 158 f.) be considered.

Troeltsch seems to suggest, that "Liberal Christianity" lacks the power to originate a church and can live only as a kind of parasitical growth upon some sturdier stock.[80] It may be that it is not driven by internal necessity to separate itself off from other faiths, on which it rather depends for support. It is otherwise with those who share the great experience of reconciliation with God in the blood of His dear Son. They know themselves to be instinct with a life peculiar to themselves and cannot help forming a community, distinguished from all others by this common great experience. We have quoted the opening words of Feine's remarks on Jesus' teaching as to His sacrificial death. The closing words are worth pondering also. They run: [81]

> "Let it be said in closing that in the two declarations of the ransom-price and the cup of the Lord's Supper there lies church-building power. Jesus did not organize His community; He founded no church in His earthly labors. But the Christian Church is an inevitable product of the declaration of the expiatory effect of His death for many. For those who have experienced redemption and reconciliation through the death of Jesus must by virtue of this gift of grace draw together and distinguish themselves over against other communities."

There is indeed no alternative. The redeemed in the blood of Christ, after all is said, are a people apart. Call them "Christians," or call them what you please, they are of a specifically different religion from those who know no such experience. It may be within the rights of those who feel no need of such a redemption and have never experienced its transforming power to contend that their religion is a better religion than the Christianity of the Cross. It is distinctly not within their rights to maintain that it is the same religion as the Christianity of the Cross. On their own showing it is not that.

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[80] As cited, col. 681.

[81] As cited, p. 148.

X

APPENDIX

THE SUPERNATURAL BIRTH OF JESUS

THE SUPERNATURAL BIRTH OF JESUS[1]

I have promised the editors of the *American Journal of Theology* to indicate to their readers the answer I think must be given to the question, "Is the doctrine of the supernatural birth of Jesus essential to Christianity?" In addressing myself to fulfil this promise, however, I find myself laboring under a good deal of embarrassment. I am naturally embarrassed, for example, by the narrowness of the space at my disposal. Within the limits allowed me, I can hope to do nothing more than suggest a few of the considerations which weigh with me, and these only in the most cursory manner. I am much more embarrassed, however, by the infelicity of discussing the relation to Christianity, considered as a system of doctrine (that is to say, as a consistent body of truth), of a fact, the historicity of which I am to leave to others to discuss, who may perhaps reach conclusions to which I could by no means assent, whether in kind or merely in degree. I can only say that I have myself no doubt whatever of the fact of the supernatural birth of Jesus, as that fact is recorded in the opening chapters of the gospels of Matthew and Luke. I certainly make no question that additional evidence of tremendous weight is brought to this fact by its place in the system of Christianity, commended as this system as a whole is by the entire body of proof which we call the "Christian evidences." But I do not believe that it needs this additional evidence for its establishment. And I prefer my readers to understand that I proceed to the consideration of its place in the Christian system with it in my hands, not as a hypothesis of more or less probability (or improbability), but as a duly authenticated actual occurrence, recognized as such on its own direct evidence, and bringing as such its own quota of support to the Christian system of which it forms a part.

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[1] From *The American Journal of Theology*, x. 1906, pp. 21–30.

I am embarrassed most of all, however, by the ambiguity of the language in which the question I am to discuss is stated. What is "the doctrine of the supernatural birth of Jesus"? What exactly, indeed, is intended by the main term employed? What is a "supernatural birth"? Were the births of Isaac and of John the Baptist "supernatural births"? Or those of Samson and of Samuel? Or those of Jeremiah and of Paul, whom, we are told, the Lord had selected for his own in or from the womb? Is not, indeed, the birth of every good man whom God prepares for some special work for him — certainly by influences beginning in the loins of his ancestors — in some sense supernatural? Nay, no one who believes in Providence can doubt that there is a supernatural element in the birth of every man that comes into the world. It may easily come about, therefore, that one may be found contending earnestly that the "supernatural birth" of Jesus is essential to Christianity, and yet sharply denying that that birth was "supernatural" in the only sense in which it is important to contend for its supernaturalness. What sense, further, we need to ask, is to be attached to the word "essential" here? Is the inquiry, perchance, whether the supernatural birth of Jesus constitutes the very essence of Christianity, so that in this doctrine Christianity is summed up? Or merely whether it enters so into the substance of Christianity that Christianity is not fully stated without it? The crowning ambiguity attaches, however, to the term "Christianity" itself. Is it to be taken subjectively or objectively? Are we asking whether it is possible for a man to commit his soul to Christ as his Savior without a clear knowledge and firm conviction of his Lord's virgin birth? Or are we asking whether any statement of Christianity can be thought complete which omits or ignores this doctrine? Or if it be supposed that this question is already settled by the use of the word "doctrine," we still have to ask what objective "Christianity" it is that we are to have in mind? The Christianity of the New Testament, or of some fragment of the New Testament, arbitrarily torn from its context and interpreted in isolation? The Christianity of the churches — the historical Christianity embodied in the authoritative creeds of Christendom; or the Christianity of a certain school of recent critical speculations — the Christianity of Auguste Sabatier, say, or of Paul Lobstein, or of Otto Pfleiderer, or of Adolf Harnack?

Were the inquiry a purely historical one, it might no doubt be soon settled. It admits of no doubt, for example, that, historically speaking, the "supernatural birth of Jesus" forms a substantial element in the Christianity as well of the New Testament, taken in its entirety, as of the creeds of the church. There it stands plainly written in both, and even he who runs may read it.[2] Of course, it does not stand written on every page of the New Testament or of the creeds — why should it? And, of course, it may be thought a debatable question whether it has been logically or practically as important to historical Christianity as its prominent confession in the documents might seem to imply.[3] That it holds no essential place in much of the "Christianity" current at the opening of the twentieth century is certainly too obvious for discussion. To the late Auguste Sabatier, for example, "Christianity" had come to mean just the altruistic temper; and nobody will imagine the "supernatural birth of Jesus" — or any kind of birth of Jesus, for that matter, natural or supernatural or unnatural — essential to the altruistic temper. Must not much the same be said also of the "Christianity" of Otto Pfleiderer, or of any form of that at present very fashionable "Christianity" which supposes the parable of the Prodigal Son, say, to contain a complete statement of the Christian religion? As there is no atonement, and no expiation, and no satisfaction, so there is no mediator, no Jesus of any kind in the parable of the Prodigal Son. And the "Christianity" which refuses to know anything but the love of God which is there revealed to us, as it has no need of a Jesus, can have no need of a "supernatural birth" for the Jesus whom it totally ignores, or for whom it makes at best but an unessential place.

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[2] "The church assigns the highest value to the doctrine of the virgin birth" (Schmiedel, "Encyclopaedia Biblica," col. 2964). It is "a constant and, we may truly say, universally recognized element in the doctrinal tradition of the post-apostolic period, for of any important or fruitful opposition to it the history of doctrine knows nothing" (Hering, "Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche," v. p. 67).

[3] This is the gist of Hering's assault on it; cf. as above, and p. 74: "The denial of the fact (of the virgin birth) has in all ages been adjudged heresy, but its positive utilization has been very slight."

It is very evident, then, that if we are to ask whether "the doctrine of the supernatural birth of Jesus is essential to Christianity," we must settle it in our minds very clearly at the outset what "Christianity" it is we are talking about. Our answer will be one thing if we are thinking of what many about us are vaguely and vainly calling "Christianity," and perhaps quite another thing if we are thinking of the Christianity of Christ and his apostles, recorded in the New Testament, and drawn from the New Testament by the historical church through all ages. This latter is the only Christianity in which I can personally have more than a historical interest. I shall therefore confine myself to it. For the same reason I shall take "the supernatural birth of Jesus" in its highest sense — that of the truly miraculous birth of Jesus from a virgin mother, without intervention of man. It is in this sense that the "supernatural birth of Jesus" was actual; and this is the only sense, therefore, in which a discussion of it can have a real, as distinguished from a merely academic, interest. Defining thus my terms, the specific question which I shall seek to answer is whether the doctrine of the miraculous birth of Jesus from a virgin mother, taught in the opening chapters of the gospels of Matthew and Luke, forms an element in the Christianity of the New Testament, indispensable in the sense that without it that Christianity would be incompletely stated and left in one important matter defective, and, therefore, liable to misconception, if not open to dangerous assault.

Were I asked to name the three pillars on which the structure of Christianity, as taught in the New Testament in its entirety, especially rests, I do not know that I could do better than point to these three things: the supernatural, the incarnation, redemption. In an important sense, these three things constitute the Christianity of the New Testament; proceeding from the more general to the more specific, they sum up in themselves its essence. What interests us particularly at the moment is that the virgin birth of Jesus takes its significant place and has its significant part to play with respect to each one of them. Without it each one of them would be sheared of some portion of its meaning and value, and would take on a different and weakened aspect. Thesis

No one can doubt that the Christianity of the New Testament is supernaturalistic through and through. 1. Super ural Whether we have regard to the person of Jesus or to the salvation he brought to men, the primary note of this Christianity certainly is supernaturalism. He who walked the earth as its Lord, and whom the very winds and waves obeyed; who could not be holden of the grave, but burst the bonds of death and ascended into the heavens in the sight of man: he who now sits at the right hand of God and sheds down his gift of salvation through his Spirit upon the men of his choice — it were impossible that such a one should have entered the world undistinguished among common men. His supernatural birth is given already, in a word, in his supernatural life and his supernatural work, and forms an indispensable element in the supernatural religion which he founded.

It would no doubt be difficult — or impossible, if you will — to believe that a natural Jesus had a supernatural origin; or, going at once to the root of the matter, that a natural "salvation" requires a supernatural Redeemer. Much of the Christianity about us today is distinctively, and even polemically, to use von Hartmann's term, "autosoteric"; and he who feels entirely competent to save himself finds a natural difficulty in believing that God must intervene to save him. I fully agree with the adherents of this "autosoteric" Christianity, that from their point of view a supernatural birth for Jesus would be devoid of significance, and therefore incredible. They should with similar frankness allow to me, I think, that to the Christianity of the New Testament, on the other hand, just because it stands as the opposite pole to their "autosoteric Christianity," the supernatural birth of Jesus is a necessity.

This, indeed, they in effect do when they argue that the virgin birth of Jesus is the invention of the Christianity of the New Testament on the basis of the extreme supernaturalism of its conception of Christianity. Thinking of Jesus as they did, we are told, the early Christians could not but postulate for him an origin consonant with what they conceived to be his nature, his powers, his career, the work he came to do, did do, is doing.[4] Nothing could be more true. The supernatural Christ and the supernatural salvation carry with them by an inevitable consequence the supernatural birth. In other words, the supernatural birth of Jesus is an implication of the Christian consciousness — that is, of course, of the supernaturalistic Christian consciousness.[5] And the Christian consciousness in this judgment receives the support of the universal human consciousness. Men have always and everywhere judged that a supernatural man, doing a supernatural work, must needs have sprung from a supernatural source.[6] If there had been nothing extraordinary in the coming of the Saviour into the world, a discordant note would have been struck at this point in the "heterosoteric" Christianity of the New Testament, which would have thrown it in all its elements out of tune. To it, it would have been unnatural if the birth of the Savior had been natural, just because it itself in none of its elements is natural, but is everywhere and through all its structure, not, indeed, unnatural or contra-natural, but distinctively supernatural.

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[4] "The conception that our Savior was a son of God born from a virgin was the involuntary, yea the inevitable, reflection of the divinity of Christ in the souls of converted Greeks" (Usener, "Das Weihnachtsfest," p. 75; cf. p. 76: "There could not fail the birth as visible sign that something divine had entered the world"). Cf. Soltau, "The Birth of Jesus Christ," p. 44.

[5] Lobstein, "The Virgin Birth of Christ," 1903, p. 33, argues that the consciousness of the gulf which separates the believer from "the One in whom he has found his Master," leads him instinctively to infer a difference in origin, and thus "the tradition of the miraculous birth of Jesus seems to anticipate the conviction of the believer, merely transferring into the realm of history a truth of which he finds in himself the most conclusive confirmation"; cf. p. 35. What is this but to say that in the logic of the heart the supernatural Redeemer demands for himself a supernatural origin?

[6] "Stories of supernatural birth may be said to have a currency as wide as the world. Heroes of extraordinary achievement or extraordinary qualities were necessarily of extraordinary birth. The wonder or the veneration they inspired seemed to demand that their entrance upon life, and their departure from it, should correspond with the impression left by their total career" (Hartland, "The Legend of Perseus," i. pp. 71, 72). So Origen ("Contra Celsum," i. 37), speaking of the story of Plato's supernatural birth, says: "But this is really a myth, and the simple incitement to imagine this of Plato was that man believes that a man of wisdom and power greater than

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The cardinal point upon which the whole of this supernaturalistic Christianity, commended to us by the New Testament, turns, is formed by its doctrine of incarnation. The supernatural Savior, who has come into the world to work a supernatural salvation, could not possibly be conceived by it as of this world. If it would be to "annul Jesus," to imagine that he had not come in the flesh, or that he who had come in the flesh was not the Word of God who in the beginning was with God and was God — God only-begotten who was in the bosom of the Father — it would no less be to "annul him" to imagine that he could owe his coming to earthly causes or collocations. Born into our race he might be and was; but born of our race, never — whether really or only apparently.

There has been a very odd attempt made, to be sure, to set over against one another the doctrines of the pre-existence and of the supernatural birth of our Lord, as if they were mutually exclusive, or at least parallel rather than complementary conceptions. In speaking of such a thing as birth, however, it is obvious that when we say pre-existence we have already said supernatural, and as soon as we have said Deity we have said miraculous. So far as appears, it required the Socinians to teach us that one of these things could be taken and the other left — that any rational mind could suppose a non-supernatural being to be the product of a super-

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those of the multitude must have had a higher and more divine origin than they." The point of importance is whether the truly supernatural *life and work* are real.

natural birth; while surely only a pronounced pantheist could so confound things that differ as to imagine that for bringing a supernatural being into the world those causes may be thought to suffice by which commonly mere men are produced. Ordinary people may be trusted to continue to judge that, as incarnation means precisely the entrance into the human race of a being not in any sense the product of the forces working in that race, but introduced from without and above, it is in its very essence a supernatural occurrence, and will necessarily bear in its mode of occurrence its credentials as such. It is, indeed, obviously not enough to say that it behooved the Divine Person who became incarnate in Jesus Christ, in entering into a new phase of existence, not to seem then first to begin to be; although to say that is no doubt to say something to the point. Would we do justice to the case, we must go on and affirm that, when the Life itself (which is also the Truth itself) entered into the conditions of human existence, it could not but come, according to its nature, creatively — bringing its own self-existing Life with it, and not making a round-about way so as to appear only now to begin, by way of derivation, to exist. When the Word was made flesh and tabernacled among men, it could not be but that men should behold his glory — a glory as of an only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

In point of fact, accordingly, it is just in proportion as men lose their sense of the Divine personality of the messianic king who is Immanuel, God with us, that they are found to doubt the necessity of the virgin birth; while in proportion as the realization of this fundamental fact of the Christianity of the New Testament remains vivid and vital with them, do they instinctively feel that it is alone consonant with it that this Being should acknowledge none other father than that Father which is in heaven, from whom alone he came forth to save the world. Accordingly, the adherents of the modern kenosis doctrine of the person of Christ, seeing in Jesus Christ nothing but God (though God shrunk to man's estate), have become the especial defenders of the doctrine of the virgin birth, and at this point the especial opponents of the modern rationalists, with whom otherwise they have so much in common. In contradistinction to both, the Christianity of the New Testament, remembering the two natures—which nowadays nearly everybody forgets—offers us in our Lord's person, not a mere man (perhaps in some sense made God), nor a mere God (perhaps in some sense made man), but a true God-man, who, being all that God is and at the same time all that man is, has come into the world in a fashion suitable to his dual nature, conceived indeed in a virgin's womb, and born of a woman and under the law, but not by the will of the flesh, nor by the will of man, but solely by the will of God who he is.[7]

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Kenosis

Not even in the incarnation, however, is the Christianity of the New Testament summed up. Rather, the incarnation appears in it, not for its own sake, but as a means to a farther end—redemption. And it is only in its relation to the New Testament doctrine of redemption that the necessity of the virgin birth of Jesus comes to its complete manifestation. For in this Christianity the redemption that is provided is distinctively redemption from sin; and that he might redeem men from sin it certainly was imperative that the Redeemer himself should not be involved in sin. He would be a bold man, indeed, who would affirm that the incarnation of the Holy One in sinful flesh presents no difficulties to his thought. The sinlessness of Jesus, in the sense of freedom from subjective corruption as well as from overt acts of sin, seems to be involved in the incarnation itself, purely and simply; and, in point of fact, those who imagine it was in principle sinful

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[7] Such criticisms as that of Réville, "Histoire du dogme de la divinité de Jésus-Christ" (1869, p. 30; 1904, p. 27), miss the mark and would apply only to the Kenotic perversion: "A pre-existent being who becomes man reduces himself, if you will, to the condition of a human embryo; but he is not conceived by virtue of an act external to himself in the womb of a woman, etc." In the New Testament view of the God-man, as there is no reduction of the Godhead to the level of a human embryo, so there is a true conception of a complete human embryo by an act external to itself. Only, the cause external to this embryo, by virtue of which it is conceived, is the power of the Most High, and not natural fertilization.

flesh which was assumed by the Son of God are prone to represent this flesh as actually cleansed of its sinfulness, either by the act of incarnation itself or by the almighty operation of the Spirit of God as a condition precedent to incarnation. But something more than sinlessness in this subjective sense was requisite for the redemption up to which the incarnation leads. Assuredly no one, resting for himself under the curse of sin, could atone for the sin of others; no one owing the law its extreme penalty for himself could pay this penalty for others. And certainly in the Christianity of the New Testament every natural member of the race of Adam rests under the curse of Adam's sin, and is held under the penalty that hangs over it. If the Son of God came into the world therefore — as that Christianity asserts to be a "faithful saying" — specifically in order to save sinners, it was imperatively necessary that he should become incarnate after a fashion which would leave him standing, so far as his own responsibility is concerned, outside that fatal entail of sin in which the whole natural race of Adam is involved. And that is as much as to say that the redemptive work of the Son of God depends upon his supernatural birth.

I am, of course, well aware that this doctrine of redemption, and as well the doctrine of sin which underlies it, is nowadays scouted in wide circles. With that, however, I have no present concern. I cheerfully admit that to a "Christianity" which knows nothing of race-sin and atonement, the necessity of the supernatural birth of the "Redeemer," if it be recognized at all, must rest on other, and perhaps on less stringent, grounds. But I have not undertaken to investigate the possible place of the supernatural birth of Jesus in the varied forms of so-called "Christianity" prevalent in the modern world, many of which stand in no other relation to the Christianity of the New Testament than that of contradiction. Nor am I to be deterred from recognizing the doctrines of "original sin" and of "satisfaction" as fundamental elements in the Christianity of the New Testament, by the habit which has grown up among those who do not like them, of speaking of them scornfully as "Augustinian" and "Anselmic." What rather attracts my attention is that it seems to be universally allowed that, on these "Augustinian" and "Anselmic" presuppositions, the doctrine of the virgin birth of Jesus is an absolutely essential element of Christianity. In so far, then, as it is admitted that the doctrines of "original sin" and of "satisfaction" are constituent elements of the Christianity of the New Testament, it may be taken as acknowledged that the virgin birth of our Lord is confessedly essential to it.[8]

If, then, it cannot be denied that the supernatural birth of Jesus enters constitutively into the substance of that system which is taught in the New Testament as Christianity — that it is the expression of its supernaturalism, the safeguard of its doctrine of incarnation, the condition of its doctrine of redemption — are we to go on and say that no one can be saved who does not hold this faith whole and entire? The question is thoroughly impertinent. We are discussing, not the terms of salvation, but the essential content of the Christian system; not what we must do to be saved, but what it behooved Jesus Christ to be and to do that he might save us. Say that faith is the instrument by which salvation is laid hold upon; the instrument by which the prerequisites of the salvation laid hold of by faith are investigated is the intellect. As it is certain that the only Jesus, faith in whom can save, is the Jesus who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, and born of the virgin Mary, according to the Scriptures, it is equally certain that the act of faith by which he is savingly apprehended involves these presuppositions, were its implicates soundly developed. But our logical capacity can scarcely be made the condition of our salvation.[9] The Scriptures do not encourage us to believe that only the wise are called. They even graciously assure us

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[8] Cf. Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 84; *Cheyne*, "Bible Problems," p. 95; etc.

[9] I have the unwonted felicity of being thoroughly at one in this with Professor Paul Schwartzkopff, who remarks: "The faith which lays hold of the living God in Christ is not necessarily conditioned by the thoroughness with which the intellect grasps its content" ("The Prophecies of Jesus Christ," E. T. p. 3).

that blasphemy itself against the Son may be forgiven. It would surely be unfortunate if weakness of intellect were more fatal than wickedness of heart. On the whole, we may congratulate ourselves that it was more imperative that Jesus, by whom the salvation has been wrought, should know what it behooved him to be and to do that he might save us, than it is that we should fully understand it. But, on the other hand, it will scarcely do to represent ignorance or error as advantageous to salvation. It certainly is worth while to put our trust in Jesus as intelligently as it may be given to us to do so. And it certainly will over and over again be verified in experience that he who casts himself upon Jesus as his divine Redeemer, will find the fact of the virgin birth of this Saviour not only consonant with his faith and an aid to it, but a postulate of it without which he would be puzzled and distressed.

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